Evangelical Christendom.

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MONTHLY NOTES.

We would again remind our readers how urgent the need is for united believing prayer to God at the opening of this year. At home, the conflict between labour and capital is becoming intense—indeed, in all parts of the world the cry of the starving thousands is rising into a deep and desperate wail; the Nihilists in Russia and the Socialists in Germany are preparing their forces, and in both countries the authorities have only one idea of the way in which the movements are to be met, and that is, forcibly to stamp them out. In Turkey, there is the same serene indifference as ever to the existence and liberty of the Christian. In Madagascar, there is a cruel and systematic endeavour on the part of the Jesuits to crush out Protestant Christianity, which cannot long be resisted even by a considerate Governor. In France, there is violent opposition to the truth, roused by the recent success granted by God to the labours of Protestant pastors and Evangelists. In our own country, Ritualism becomes daily more daring, till there is hardly a point in which her doctrines and her services are not assimilated to Rome. Lax views of inspiration prevail even among devout Christians. In the face of all these perils, the Lord's remembrancers should cry mightily unto God, that "when the enemy comes in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord may lift up a standard against him." That standard can be none other than the crucified, yet risen, and returning Christ. When He is lifted up, many will be drawn to Him.

It is encouraging to remember that besides the great volume of prayer and praise which ascends on high during the week of Universal Prayer, a daily sacrifice of intercession is offered up in different parts of our own country,

also in the United States, and many other lands where there are Christian centres. The weekly gathering for workers specially organised by the McAll Mission in the Rue Royale, Paris, is well calculated to hold up the hands of disciples labouring in the midst of the carnival of pleasure. Earnest are the supplications which arise from those who would warn the multitudes to flee from the wrath to come. We were much interested to hear, on a recent occasion, the well-known M. Eugéne Reveillaud give an address at it on thoroughly Evangelical Alliance lines. He was speaking on Luke ix. 49, 50, where John forbad the Disciple who followed not with them. But "Jesus said unto him, forbid him not, for he that is not against us is for us." We wish we could recall his glowing and forcible words. Clearly he pointed out that what was needed was the essence, not the surroundings; the spirit, and not the form. Wherever Christ has a disciple, I have a brother; and he that can do mighty works for the Master must certainly have imbibed His Spirit, and be treading in His steps.

We believe it can be clearly proved by statistics, as well as by the observation of many persons well qualified to judge, that attendance at the House of God has seriously declined in our own country during the last ten or twelve years. Before that, we had a period of great privilege and wondrous blessing, lasting for at least ten years. The mission movement was then at its height, and thousands of souls were gathered in through the clear and faithful preaching of a host of evangelists, clerical and lay. Probably, there was never an era so fruitful since the days of the Apostles. But those who passed through this period unconverted are harder than before; and few now attend church or chapel from a view of respectability. Tens of thousands spend the Lord's Day in some form of amusement. It is quite true that we have still in our midst a multitude of consecrated men and women. This is abundantly proved by the quantity and quality of those who attend the various Christian Conferences, and by the self-sacrifice which leads so many of our brothers and sisters to devote themselves to missionary labour. But these are a minority of the professing Christians. At home, the leakage is more observed in London than anywhere. The manufacturing towns of the North and Midlands have proportionately more religious enthusiasm and activity. But, we gather from a paper lately written by Dr. Cuyler, that it is in the rural districts of America that the greatest falling-off is exhibited. "At present," he says, "an immense proportion of the people on the farms and in the small hamlets seldom enter the House of God." He naturally feels the subject to be one of vital importance, and asks: "How can the non-Church-goers be brought to the House of Worship? How can the careless and unconverted class be brought under the reach and power of a living Gospel?" He believes that the minister should interest himself in the people, and win their personal regard; and though he views the prospect as very critical, he does not think it hopeless. For ourselves, though we doubt not that it is incumbent on every pastor to "preach the Word in season and out of season," and on every enlightened member of a congregation to do what he can to win those around him, and though we are sure each will reap a harvest in some proportion to his faithfulness of testimony, yet we fear the time predicted by St. Paul is rapidly approaching, when "men will not endure sound doctrine." "When the Son of Man cometh, will He find faith on the earth?"

The Church Association has been holding its autumn Conference at Shrewsbury. All the clergy who attended it came not from the city, but from the vicinity and from a distance, but the Protestant laity warmly supported the Protestant banner. The Rev. Talbot Greaves spoke with great power. One of his subjects was "the Reunion question, as it regards Protestant Churches." Of the three stages of union—fraternisation, federation, and fusion—he thought the last was not practicable, nor perhaps desirable. "A strongly-organised Catholic Church spread over the world would almost inevitably grow into a colossal tyranny." So the lack of organic unity is absolutely a blessing. He therefore believed we must aim at fraternisation, and not absorption. Our common dangers call for an alliance with the various Protestant bodies in our land. Indeed, he thought we might go a step further, and form a Protestant federation of the Anglo-Saxon people. Whatever view may be held as to the possibility of such a federation, united action if manifested by a much more general support of the existing Protestant societies might tell with the Government.

England has always boasted of being the land of freedom. But we fear that she is in great danger of losing that title. The ruffianly conduct of hired Roman Catholic rowdies has been too much for the authorities in Manchester, Sheffield, and St. Helen's. Two ex-priests, the Revs. T. Connellan and J. Slattery, have been denied the right to speak out freely to audiences who wished to hear them. It is a great admission on the part of the Romanists that they are afraid for the masses to hear what can be said on the other side. But cannot English magistrates and English authorities prevent and put down disorder? The right answer they should have given to the deputations of priests was: "If you keep your flocks in order, there will be no riot." The priests first prime their howling "Ransomers" with shillings, and instruct them to make all the noise they can, and then they go with long faces to the authorities and say, "We know that if the meeting takes place, there will be a serious riot." Who planned it? Who instigated it? These are the questions which all lovers of free speech ought to be asking now. We trust that all straightforward men, and all sound Protestants, will move in this matter so decidedly and persistently that the authorities in British cities and towns shall be compelled to yield to their just demands.

We gather from "the Vatican Correspondent" of *The Times* that the Pope "longs for the return of England to the unity of the Church." It is added that "he loved the English people: they were upright, loyal, lovers of the truth, and sober minded." If this be the case, the Pope is very unfortunate in the men whom he selects, and the methods he adopts. Why are stone-throwing Ransomers enlisted as chief exponents of the truth? As English people bear so high a character, should they not be allowed to hear both sides of a subject, the more so since "they are lovers of the truth"? When "he loves the English people" so much, are we to conclude that he excepts those English and Irish men and women, who have left his Church, and who wish to tell their countrymen, temperately and calmly, how God has opened their eyes? We want much greater proof of his love for Messrs. Campbell, Connellan, and many more, whom Popish mobs have tried

to murder again and again. It may be asked, what has the Pope to do with this? Well, he appointed Cardinal Vaughan to represent him in this country. His predecessor, Cardinal Manning, started the Order of Ransomers, or hinderers of Protestant meetings, and Cardinal Vaughan supports and encourages them.

It is frequently stated by English and Irish Roman Catholics that the reading of the Bible is not discouraged by the Church to which they belong. What is the real truth upon this subject has lately been amply proved by an able pamphlet in answer to "the Catholic Truth Society," written by Mr. Collette. It was also abundantly exhibited by the essays of a learned member of the Church of Rome, which appeared in *The Contemporary Review* during 1892—1894. He talks of "exposing his Church to terrible and needless risks" by the teaching of the Bible, and adds, with reference to "members of the true fold," "the vast majority of them never open a Bible." With regard to France, he observes, "all sorts and conditions of men fight shy of the Bible there." But why, we may well ask? First, because the Bible is hardly ever to be had; secondly, because the priests do all they can to hinder its circulation. What did Father Curci say in 1879? That in Italy "the New Testament is of all books that which is least studied and read amongst us, insomuch that the greater part of the laity do not so much as know that such a book exists in the world." It is quite certain that Rome will never permit the reading of the Word of God where she has the power to prevent it. She will never allow it except in a Protestant country where public opinion is strong, and where the liberty of the individual is a privilege which he will not forego.

Our own columns have contained frequent references to a great revival now going on in Italy, and we gather, from an interview lately held with the Rev. George H. Giddins by a correspondent of *The Independent & Nonconformist*, that at Pontasserchio not a single Protestant was to be found a year ago. Now 300 people filled the hall, and climbed every available window, while they listened earnestly to the preaching of the Gospel. At Ronco Canavese, drenching rain did not deter the peasants from walking long distances to be present at the services. The Church in Milan has an eloquent ex-monk, Giuseppe Silva, for its pastor, and a good work is being done there. But more is to be expected from the villages than the cities of Italy. During the past year, 850 were brought into fellowship with the Protestant Church. There is much encouragement both at Rome and Florence, where the pastors show activity and spirituality. Indeed, in nearly all parts of the Continent there is an awakening. We only wish that in our own land the resistance to Rome was equally evident and intense.

Spain, which was for many years the most backward portion of the Continent, is showing signs of awakening. A school for Spanish girls, carried on by Mrs. Gulick, the wife of an American missionary, has been eminently successful. One hundred and sixty girls have been members of this school, and a large proportion of this number have gone away to work in Christian centres, or have exercised a good influence in the communities where they have lived. They have 1,266 children under their immediate care, and there

are 762 children in the mission schools. Since 1890, the State system of education has been adopted for girls, and a large number of them have obtained the highest marks given by the Institute. Four were entitled to receive the degree of Bachelor of Arts in 1894. "These girls have studied English, French, music, and drawing, a thorough course of Bible study, and had completed the course of sewing and embroidery required in Spanish schools." As a Spanish newspaper said: "These girls are educated not only in literature and science, but in truth and courage, and in the knowledge and fear of God." A still higher step was taken in 1895, when two girls were sent to the University of Madrid. At the end of the first year they were awarded the highest mark of excellence given by the University, and last June they obtained a degree equivalent to that of M.A. The professors were perfectly amazed to find that all this instruction had been given by women. It may be that these young girl graduates have done more to break down the opposition to the Gospel in Spain than years of preaching. The very appearance of these girls is changed. They have a nobility and simplicity rarely, if ever, seen before. At the same time, the Spanish Reformed Episcopal Church is making progress. The Rev. Pedro Sala, an ex-priest, who is working in Barcelona, finds that there are some points in which the laity are ready to agree with him. One is in repudiating the Latin services, which he views as the principal cause of their civil and religious decadence: thus the people are deprived of all instruction as to the way of salvation, as they know nothing of the language in which the Scriptures are read, and prayer offered up. The finer spirits are also interested to know that we can have immediate communion with God, without the intervention of the priest.

THE PROGRESS OF CHRISTIANITY DURING THE REIGN OF QUEEN VICTORIA.*

By the Rev. J. Murray Mitchell, M.A., LL.D.

Suppose we have two maps of the world coloured so as to represent the various religions now existing—the one map as they stood in 1837 and the other as in 1857. How does the difference between them strike us? Our surprise is to find the two maps so like each other. The dark colour that represents the Heathen systems seems nearly as large as ever. No doubt, changes have taken place. Certain Heathen races have been melting away,—notably so, the Polynesians and the Red Indians of America; and, in various parts of the world, people of European stock and professedly Christian have been rapidly increasing. So far, then, the colouring in the two maps has undergone a change.

I well remember the time when we spoke of the non-Christian population of the globe as being six hundred millions. Somewhat later the usual estimate was eight hundred millions, but for years past it has been given as a thousand millions. Our statistics are unavoidably imperfect, but we may assume the last number to be now approximately correct. On the whole, there remains the painful but unquestionable truth that there are more Pagans in the world at the present day than there were when our honoured Queen began to reign.

The population of the globe is continually increasing, and in that increase the non-Christian portion has a share. It is not improbable that the number of Pagans in the world has increased by two hundred millions during the nineteenth century. India, for example, under the *Pax Britannica*, doubles its vast population in a

* An address delivered at the Cambridge Conference of the Evangelical Alliance.

considerably less period than a hundred years; and this notwithstanding the recurrence, from time to time, of such terrible visitations as cholera, plague, and famine.

At present, if the population of the globe be probably somewhat above fourteen hundred millions, the nominally Christian portion of it may exceed four hundred millions; that is to say, there are five Heathen for every two professing Christians.

It is of importance to note that, while both Christians and Pagans are increasing in number—and the Pagan world, as yet, more rapidly than the Christian,—yet the *proportional* increase is larger in the case of the Christians—probably twice as large. The distinction between *actual* and *proportional* increase is easily seen. There are, let us say, two trees, both growing. The one is more than twice as tall as the other; but the shorter is steadily gaining on the other, and will, by-and-bye, overtop it.

So far, I have been speaking of the natural growth of population. But during the whole century now drawing to a close, our Protestant missions have been advancing, and have been, under God, the means of bringing millions to a profession of the Christian faith. Three generations of converts have passed away; but the converts and the children of converts who are still alive, are doubtless more than four millions in number. The far greater proportion of these has been brought in during the reign of Queen Victoria,—say, nearly four millions of men, women, and children.

I speak now of Protestant missions. There are, of course, also Roman Catholic and Russian missions—the latter in Siberia and Japan, the former in many parts of the world. But it is difficult to obtain trustworthy statistics regarding these efforts, and we may confine our attention to the work of the Protestant Churches.

The Missionary advance during this century has been much more rapid than it was during the first century of the Christian era. The number of Christians in the world in the year 100 or 130 has been variously estimated; but it cannot have exceeded half-a-million, and has often been stated at a lower figure. If any feeling of self-complacency arises in our hearts when we compare the two periods, the feeling ought to be rebuked when we remember that the means now at the command of Protestant Christians are so immensely superior to those of the poor persecuted Christians of the first century; and one may well ask why there has not been a putting forth of tenfold evangelistic energy, and why, instead of four, there are not forty million of converts in heathen lands. There is no presumption in putting such a question; for the uniform experience has been that, when the Church is ready to evangelise, the Lord is ready to convert. We cannot, indeed, still the beatings of His heart of love; but we do impede the movements of His wonder-working arm.

The visible progress of the Gospel is by no means equal in all parts of the heathen world. Certain forms of Paganism are giving way more rapidly than others. It will be interesting and instructive to look at this fact with some attention. But, in the first instance, let us take a brief retrospect of the progress of the truth in ancient days. About six centuries before Christ the prophet Jeremiah sorrowfully exclaimed: "Hath a nation changed its gods which are yet no gods?" Up to that time no heathen people had been known to abandon its idolatries; the prophet complains that Israel alone was faithless to its God. From that time on to the Christian era some changes indeed took place. Proselytes to Judaism were seen here and there; and even when not professed, the influence of that faith was in many places felt. But there was no movement on a grand scale—no national conversion. It is true that the Edomites were converted to Judaism; but the change was effected simply by force—the Jewish conqueror, John Hyrcanus, imposing his faith on the conquered children of Esau. But then came the great command—"Preach the Gospel to every creature," accompanied by the great promise—"Lo, I am with you!" Then a large number of false religions perished; not, indeed, by sudden rout and slaughter, but by slow retreat before advancing truth—a retreat in which desperate attempts were made from time to time to rally. The religions of Greece, Rome, Egypt and Abyssinia, Phenicia, Asia Minor, Babylon, Armenia, and, in the West, Druidism, with the Teutonic and Slavonic

creeds—all gradually gave way before the steady onward march of Christianity. These systems are now all dead and buried, without hope of resurrection.

But there were religions in early Christian times which have not perished up to the present day. These have not survived because they were either better or stronger than the creeds we have mentioned, but because they hardly came into conflict with the Gospel. The only one that did so to any considerable extent was Zoroastrianism, the religion of Persia—which was, in the early Christian centuries, a sternly intolerant creed, under the influence of which the blood of martyrs flowed profusely.

The chief Pagan religions still existing are the following: Spirit-worship or Animism, Hinduism, Zoroastrianism, Buddhism, Confucianism and Taoism (in China), Shinto (in Japan), and Islam or Mohammadanism. The last is comparatively modern in origin, having arisen in the seventh century after Christ.

The most widely spread of these religions is spirit-worship. The existence of a Supreme Being is generally admitted; but he is very seldom, if at all, worshipped. Worship is paid to spirits, who almost invariably are malignant,—veritable fiends; it is simply a deprecation of evil. This worship easily runs into sorcery and magic; all trials come from the demons or their earthly agents, such as wizards, medicine-men, and the like. This may be called the religion of all uncivilised races; but it also underlies Pagan systems generally, and, in geological language, is almost everywhere *cropping out*. It cannot strictly be called a *system*, for it is as vague and formless as it is dark and hideous.

Now, it is among the races enslaved by this base superstition that the greatest triumphs of the Gospel have been won. We have often seen how in India the dread of demons sits like a nightmare on the breast of the poor Kol or Santal; but the horror flies at dawn of day—that is to say, when he hears and can believe the marvellous truth that "God is love." He flees to Christ more from a dread of demons than a sense of sin. The sense of sin comes later.

If spirit-worship is the faith that first gives way when the Gospel is preached, the one that shows the most determined attitude of resistance is Mohammadanism. Of all the creeds we have mentioned, this alone is extending its sway. It is doing so especially in Africa north of the line,—this chiefly, yet not solely, by war and conquest. In Turkey preaching to Mohammadans is forbidden, and it is scarcely permitted in Persia and Arabia. It is sometimes said that there are few or no conversions from Mohammadanism. This is a mistake; there have been not a few conversions in Egypt and India, and many in "Netherlands India"—*i.e.*, Java, and other islands subject to the Dutch in S.E. Asia. Apparently, however, the recent defeat of Greece by Turkey has sent a wave of fanaticism over all the Mohammadan world; and the Dutch and German missions in S.E. Asia are feeling its effects.

Buddhism had once a strongly missionary spirit, but it has departed. Only one small sect in Japan has any traces of it now.

Looking over the mission field, how wonderfully is the Gospel seen to be advancing in many places! Let me run over a few names. Greenland, in which there is now not a single professed heathen; Madagascar, where, at the Queen's accession, Christianity was proscribed, and the blood of martyrs was flowing in torrents; New Zealand, the Society Islands, the Fiji Islands, the New Hebrides, the Sandwich Islands, New Guinea, India (the Aborigines), Japan, Manchuria, China, Uganda, Nyassaland—what need is there to enter into details regarding the work of God in such places? Of these we are almost justified in taking up the words of our Lord Himself: "The kingdom of heaven is suffering violence; and the violent are taking it by force." What would Carey say if he could see the stupendous changes that have been rapidly taking place? But does he not see them? And does not the onward progress of the truth in these and other places "kindle higher joy in heaven"? Assuredly the sword of the Spirit, tempered of old on high, has not become blunted in the lapse of ages. Or, in other words, the Gospel of reconciliation as still preached by ordinary men—very ordinary men, if you choose to call them so—is seen to be as irresistible now as when it flowed of old in words of fire from Apostolic lips—the lips of a Paul or an Apollos.

Thus far I have spoken of the progress of Christianity as seen in its drawing forth of men from Pagan religions, and enrolling them by baptism in the Church of Christ. But, as you have often heard, it is a grievous mistake to measure the effects of the Gospel in Heathendom simply by the number of baptisms. The light of Christian truth radiates far beyond the limits of the Church.

In general it is not the deeper and more distinctive doctrines of Christianity that first recommend themselves to the Pagan mind. Were a keen, penetrating sense of sin widely diffused in Heathendom, we might well expect to see the glad tidings of salvation rejoicingly received by multitudes as soon as preached. But, alas! a sense of personal guilt is rarely met with: conscience seems asleep, often drugged with opiates. It needs to be shaken and roused: some missionaries have said it requires to be generated. Where there is little or no sense of sin, we vainly press the claims of the great Redemption. How often have we heard the people say: "Preach about God, and we will hear you; but don't speak to us about Christ—we have no need of Him."

Now observe an important historical fact. Before the coming of Christ Judaism was largely spread over the Roman Empire. Its influence, as I have said, was far from inconsiderable. Proselytes were found in many places, and even where there was no profession of the faith, its influence was powerfully felt. "The conquered have given laws to the conquerors," exclaimed a Roman philosopher—*victoribus victi leges dederunt*. Everywhere the Jews sought to communicate the great truths they had been divinely taught regarding God and the soul, and righteousness and sin, and heaven and hell, and the folly and wickedness of idolatry. Judaism was thus the forerunner of Christianity in the ancient world: it prepared the soil in which the seeds of the Gospel truth could be hopefully sown. In India and elsewhere Christianity has to be its own forerunner. Among all that hear it proclaimed—all educated men especially—it diffuses great fundamental truths like those we have referred to, and these commend themselves to the natural reason and conscience. None of the educated in India will speak now of *gods;* they all speak of *God*. The more advanced men dwell earnestly on the Fatherhood of God, and the Brotherhood of Man. Whence did they gather these majestic verities? Only from that Christianity whose deeper doctrines they still reject. As Christianity slowly but irresistibly presses in, they would fain come to a compromise with it. "We worship," exclaims an orthodox Hindu, "both Krishna and Christ." "Let us add the Bible," says another, "to our own Shastras." This mood of mind is, of course, transitional: it indicates the dawn which, in the moral, as in the natural world, is herald of the sunrise. Meanwhile, in dealing with such men as the high-class Hindus and the *literati* of China, we are reminded of the Apostle's experience: "not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble are called"; and very probably such proud-hearted ones as these will be the last to take upon the gentle, yet humbling, yoke of Christ.

In regard to Hinduism, it is well to remember that the name covers a multitude of conflicting creeds, and that the bond that keeps the parts together is not religious but social—the great system of caste. An institution so tyrannical—so inhuman—cannot possibly continue long. Not only Christianity, but the "fierce light" of modern thought is irreconcilably opposed to it. It is giving way slowly in what has been called the "unchanging East"; but progress is distinctly perceptible.

Some may perhaps say—So much for quantity; but what about quality? Are not the converts in many cases little better than baptised Pagans? No doubt it might reasonably have been feared that they would present a lower type of Christianity. If there be any truth in the doctrine of heredity—and doubtless there is—it was to be expected that the children of heathen parents would be inferior to children born in Christian lands; and farther, seeing that the majority of our Christians, though they are the children and grandchildren of Christians, have been brought up in heathen lands, and have necessarily breathed much of a heathen atmosphere—heathen men and women being all around—it might have been apprehended that the standard of character in native Churches would fall below that of Churches in Christendom. And yet, and yet, it is not so. The character of our native Protestant Christians will easily stand a comparison with that of Protestant Christians in Britain or America. And when persecution has come, the native

Churches have presented as noble examples of devotedness to Christ as the records of the Church in any age are able to supply.

So far, then, we have been attending to the progress of Christianity among heathen communities. Regarding its spread among the Jews a sentence or two must suffice. It is calculated that, during the last sixty years, about one hundred thousand of the children of Abraham have been brought into the Church of Christ. No less important is the fact that at present nearly the whole race is in a state of eager expectation. The movement that agitates so many minds, called "Zionism," which means that they should return in force to Palestine, may not be carried out on a large scale. Easy-going Jews, possessors of wealth in many cases, may prefer money-making in London, Paris, or New York, to meeting the discomforts of an agricultural settlement in the land of their fathers. But we must remember that only a fraction of the Jewish community cared to return from Babylon in the days of Ezra and Nehemiah. Yet with that fraction rested the hopes of the nation. In any case the mental effervescence now so widely at work cannot fail to issue in far-reaching changes.

I do not understand that my subject requires me to dwell at great length on the progress of religion in Christian countries and churches; and I gladly escape from discussing a theme so vast and complex. A hurried glance at Christendom—by way of supplement to this paper—is the utmost I can attempt.

On the venerable Churches of the East a deep impression has been made by the circulation of the Scriptures and the faithful preaching of the truth. This has been witnessed especially among the Copts, the Armenians, and the so-called Nestorians; but an influence has also been exerted on the Syrian Church in Southern India. In European Turkey, among various bodies connected with the "Orthodox" Church, decided good has been done. Bulgaria, for example, may be said to owe its very existence as a nation to Robert College at Constantinople. The awful persecutions to which the unhappy Armenians have been subjected have had the remarkable effect of bringing the hearts of the reformed and unreformed into far fuller sympathy with each other. The fury of the Moslem oppressor, we trust, will now cease; but at any rate we may surely look for the fulfilment of Tertullian's maxim—*Semen est sanguis Christianorum—It is seed, the blood of the Christians.*

In Europe, the very extensive circulation of the Holy Scriptures in France, Italy, and Russia is full of significance and promise.

And now a few words about the state of things at home. In this there is much that we must grieve over. There is also much on account of which we can rejoice. Our feelings are thus strangely mingled. There is, for example, intemperance. There is a deplorable absence from public worship on the part of many. The moral tone of much of the literature is low. The minds of men seem unsettled. There have been such marvellous scientific discoveries and practical applications of these that everything seems undergoing a revolution. Why should we be tied down to what is traditional and old in religion? And hence much unbelief; not reasoned infidelity, but doubt lightly caught up and thoughtlessly retailed. In the field of argument, Christianity stands invincible as ever. Science has now no quarrel with religion. The law of evolution, so wide-reaching in its application, infringes, when rightly understood, on no Christian truth. Many people seem alarmed at the progress of what is called the "higher criticism." There is no cause of alarm. The wiser critics will correct the wilder. How pointedly has Harnack, just the other day, corrected Baur as to early Christian chronology! When the present effervescence has passed away we shall all see that the Bible is more human than we thought it, but certainly not less divine.

We see a softening in the spirit of the nation. For example, the death penalty is inflicted far less frequently; Draconian laws have been repealed. The treatment of prisoners and the insane is less severe. Women and children have been exempted from excessive and unsuitable work in mines and factories. Some have said that these changes are owing to a general relaxation of nerve; yet one sees no abatement of strength or courage in the race. Who shall say that, when the voice of duty calls, the heroic heart fails our sailors in a storm or our soldiers on the field of battle?

Since 1871, when the Education Act for England was passed, there has undoubtedly been visible no small degree of progress, of mental elevation.

The spirit of philanthropy has been diligently at work. What emotions rise within us when we think of the "charities of London" alone! The so-called "Positive" philosophers make a religion of this, and carry altruism to an excess; but the Churches, too, have been learning better than before that the service of man is part of the service of God.

In regard to Foreign missions—missions to non-Christian peoples—the growth of zeal has been very great. True, it is very small when compared with what duty demands; but contrast it with what it was sixty years ago! Mission work by women among women has advanced with cheering steps. Not less important are medical missions. And the Student Volunteer Missionary Union, which sprang up some ten years ago, cannot fail—when we think of the former apathy of University men—to make the heart thrill with joy.

One of the subjects that have been more and more attracting the attention of Christians is that of Union. The divisions of the professing Church are manifold; and those in Protestantism are especially numerous. When these are accompanied with strife and harsh debate, they are universally felt to be a grievous evil and a grievous shame. We all remember with what scathing comments these have been visited by Romish controversialists—as, for instance, by the celebrated Bossuet, the Eagle of Meaux, as he was called—veritably an eagle, terrible with beak and claws.

But the era of division is passed and that of re-union has begun. The Evangelical Alliance has done priceless service to the cause of unity by holding up, in the sight of all men, the fundamental truth that all believers are one in Christ—"*Unum corpus sumus in Christo*"; that there *is* an inviolate unity, which has not to be *created*, but *confessed*, felt, and carried out to its legitimate consequences.

But while this is true of the Church mystical, what about the professing Church? For years past kindred drops have been mingling into one. Thus, in Scotland, two bodies coalesced into the United Presbyterian Church, and the Reformed Presbyterians joined the Free Church; now the Free and United Presbyterian bodies are arranging for a union; and, were it not for a conscientious difference of view on the question of Establishment, the three great divisions of Presbyterians would speedily flow into one. Similar unions have taken place in Canada and Australia. We have also had great Congresses—Anglican, Presbyterian, Methodist, and Congregationalist—the members of which were gathered from nearly all quarters of the globe. Recently, we have seen a federation of the Free Churches in England. These things are but specimens. The Bishops, lately assembled at Lambeth, solemnly declared that "the Divine purpose of a visible unity among Christians is a fact of Revelation;" and they expressed the desire that "opportunities of united prayer between the representatives of different Christian bodies should be sought for."

There are three great forms of church order—Episcopacy, Presbytery and Congregationalism—and that any of them will speedily disappear is exceedingly improbable. Any man who has strong convictions as to the supreme importance of the framework of the Church will, of course, still speak out; but unkind bickerings will gradually cease;—even what is termed the "Spirit of the Age" would rebuke them. Meanwhile, it is of importance to note that the critical, careful investigations into Scripture and history of men like Hort and Sanday have led them to conclusions that will command universal attention. For example, Dr. Sanday says:—

"The enquiries which have of late been made into the early history of the Christian ministry seem to me to result in an Eirenicon between the Churches."

Dr. Hort wrote to Dr. Hatch: "I quite go with you in condemning the refusal of fellowship with sister churches merely because they make no use of some element of organisation assumed to be *jure divino* essential. In organisation, as in other things, all churches have much, I think, to learn from each other; the Church of England as much as any."

But we must look beyond the British islands to America and the Continent,—to all the churches of the Reformation. Amongst these there ought to be, and we cannot doubt there will speedily be, a largely increased amount of intercommunion and co-operation. Alas for any church that chooses to remain apart and isolated from her sisters! They suffer; but she suffers most of all.

Can we now sum up in a sentence or two the leading points we have been considering?

Abroad, in heathen lands, the work of the Lord advances with steady steps. He blesses our feeble initial efforts, in order that our hearts may be filled with thankfulness, and we be impelled to run the way of His commandments. We are summoned to "the help of the Lord." How long is He to be kept waiting for His auxiliaries?

In regard to home, it is truly saddening to witness the terrible evils that still exist, especially, yet not solely, in our large cities. But were London and New York as bad as Rome and Corinth in the Apostles' days—which, thank God, they are not—let us fearlessly assail the enemy in the spirit of the Apostles, and with their war-weapons of victory. It has been said that there is "an exultation apparent in early Christian writers in the prospect of a great moral revolution in human life; and that this is one of the most singular and solemn things in history."* Let us, like the early Christians, be men of exulting hope! For not a fragment of true work is lost; no, not an atom. "Wherefore, my beloved brethren, let us be steadfast, immoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as we know that our labour is not in vain in the Lord."

LINE UPON LINE.

The following is an extract from a private letter received not long ago:—

"After some years of great spiritual darkness, intellectual difficulties, distressing doubts, great weakness and great sin, God, by judgments and persuasions, has led and driven me to Himself, having brought me to the end of my own resources, and shown me something of His grace. He has become 'God, my exceeding joy.' But still, I am not only in great heaviness daily through manifold temptations, but sorely tried with the difficulty of apprehending some prominent and fundamental aspects of Truth. I do not seek to resolve all mysteries, and I do not refuse faith on the ground of mystery. But I do wish to have a clear and adequate reason for whatever faith I have or ought to have, and I wish to know what God would have me believe regarding Himself, His being, His Son, His salvation, His covenant, and relations to me. Although in claiming nothing from God but His unmerited mercy, and seeking to live by faith in all things, and to do His will, I am assured of His grace, and think that I am a child of God, I have been struggling for years with the Unitarian bias of my thoughts, and am painfully confused in mind, regarding the Trinity and the Divinity of Christ. Does the Godhead contain three separate moral agencies and intelligencies? And is Jesus verily God in an absolute sense? During the six years that I have loved the Bible above all other books and read in it continually, with continual prayer for light, it has not yet become at all obvious to my mind that the common orthodox statements of those doctrines are either the necessary or right deductions from Scriptural data. If they be right, how shall I pray to three different persons as if they were one person, or fix my mind in devotion on these three different points at once? On the other hand, if the Trinity but represents three aspects or conditions of or modes of existence and activity of the One divine person, how shall I think of God as supremely and eternally the God of love without an eternal and adequate object of love? Or how shall I conceive of God, who is Love, finding His eternal blessedness in an eternal act of self-complacency?"

We do not know that we are called upon to justify the common orthodox statements of the doctrines mentioned above. There is much that is called orthodox that seems to us to go beyond what is written in the Word. We regret very much that our friend should have been brought up under influences so calculated to bias his mind against the views of Trinitarian Christians, and bring his conscience under a morbid fear of impinging on the greatness of the Father by giving too much honour to the Son, a fear of which not a trace is discernible in the New Testament, either in Christ's teachings or those of the Apostles.

We wish to draw attention to a very important principle that characterises the

* By Dean Church.

teaching given in the school of Christ, which is the school of God. We refer to a divine order of consecution in which things must be learned or else not learned at all. The same obtains in any science, in every branch of mathematics. The scholar may turn over the leaves of his text-book and find more interesting matter in the latter part of the book than in the first part. He gives his attention to this more interesting matter, but every moment he comes to some statement that he does not understand. In vain he attempts to master these hard passages; his efforts are completely thrown away. Perhaps he asks the teacher. But the teacher himself cannot explain them, because of the incapacity of the scholar to understand the explanation. The teacher points out to him that the reason why he does not grasp the meaning of those advanced sections is because he has not mastered the preliminary matter. To reach the top of a ladder a man must put his foot on the lower rung and then on the second, and so advance from one round to another. It would be absurd for a boy who neglects to learn multiplication and division, to insist on learning the rule of three or the calculation of interest. Under the Old Dispensation the Jews found many things in their prophecies that must have been very perplexing for them; was it necessary that they should spend their time and strength in endeavouring to solve statements that must in the nature of things continue obscure until the time for their fulfilment should come? The best thing for them was to endeavour faithfully to comprehend what God wished them to do, and to do it under the sustaining hope inspired by the prophecies, exercising patience with regard to much that was obscure in these.

"The Lord thy God is one God." The truth of the divine unity is stated most absolutely in the Bible, and not more so in the Old Testament than in the New. The fact of Christ's divinity is declared just as positively in the New as that of the Father is. The representation always is that the more we see the Godhead in Christ, the more we honour God. The Unitarians have the idea that the disciples of Christ were carried away by their admiration of Christ so as to attribute to Him more than properly belonged to Him. This would show that Christ was one of the most defective teachers, not knowing how to guard His disciples against such an obvious tendency. But anyone who carefully reads the evangelists must see that they are chiefly concerned for the truth, reporting just as readily those sayings of Christ that would be reckoned depreciatory as those which set forth His greatness—*e.g.*, "Why callest thou me good? There is none good save one—God." "I can of myself do nothing." "The Father is greater than I." "Whosoever speaketh against the Son it shall be forgiven him." Unless the disciples taught what Christ intended them to teach, His was a suicidal mission. No such example of failure could be found anywhere else. It is just as impossible to make too much of Christ as it would be to make too much of God. "In Him is all the fulness of the Godhead bodily." There can in the nature of things be only one omnipotent, omnipresent, self-existent being. In order to know this glorious Being the sinner must behold Him in Christ. God reveals Himself in Christ in such a way as to secure the confidence of the sinner. The Spirit of God is given to the believer, and he thus receives a divine attestation of the fact that God is well-pleased with him for thus trusting in Jesus. The latter part of John xvii. shows how perfectly one Christ is with the Father; and the believer has henceforth no fear that any honour shown to the one will miss the other. The believer has a consciousness of need that will not let him lose sight of the fact that it is through Christ he approaches the Father and the Father him. Christ is the meeting-place for God and man.

The object of the Bible is not to answer all possible questions, but to make man acquainted with his duty in this life and with his prospects for eternity. We are not called upon to settle questions that the Bible does not settle. The Apostle Paul counted all but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ. We cannot give our correspondent, with whom we heartily sympathise, any better counsel than to follow in this the example of the Apostle. The Spirit of God is with us for the very purpose of revealing Christ unto us; and how does he do it? By directing our attention to the things reported concerning Him.—G. B.

"THE PRACTICAL RESOLUTIONS."

By the Rev. JOHN CALLIS M.A., *Rector of Holy Trinity, Heigham, Norwich.*

In the good providence of God we are assembled in this place—to many of us of happy and hallowed memories—for a twofold purpose. We have come together, as representatives of many and varied Christian Communions, to seek (1) to gather from the Word of God, and from each other, as we may be taught of the Holy Spirit, the true nature of that unity which He desires should exist among us; and (2) how He would have us manifest this unity towards each other, towards the whole Universal Church of Christ, and towards the world. May I suggest that this University—with its Colleges, Schools, and Faculties—is an illustration of Unity in variety, and variety in Unity? Here is liberty of opinion and action happily exercised on broad grounds of common agreement. Knowledge is the one great object of pursuit—if not of worship—here; and the training afforded is to enable the possessor to use that knowledge with practical effect to his own advantage and happiness; but, better still, for the advantage and happiness of mankind at large. Some of us feel in the fact that we were Cambridge men a bond drawing us together as in a happy brotherhood. By the regulations of this Holy Alliance, we are now to consider how we may best promote the great cause of "godly union and concord." Certain Practical Resolutions were agreed upon by the London Conference in 1846, and adopted by the British Organization at Manchester the same year. These it is customary to have read and commended to the practical attention of the members at each Annual Conference of this British Organization of the Evangelical Alliance. It is my privilege and responsibility to have this important duty laid upon me on the present occasion. Most, if not all, here have, I think, printed copies of these Resolutions in one or other of the publications of the Alliance which have been put into their hands. You will observe that they are *eight* in number. These are my eight texts, upon each of which I purpose to give but a very short sermon.

Resolution I.—Personal Conduct and the Use of the Press:

"That the members of this Alliance earnestly and affectionately recommend to each other in their own conduct, and particularly in their own use of the Press, carefully to abstain from and put away all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil-speaking, with all malice; and in all things in which they may yet differ from each other, to be kind, tender-hearted, forbearing one another in love, forgiving one another, even as God, for Christ's sake, hath forgiven them; in everything seeking to be followers of God, as dear children, and to walk in love, as Christ also hath loved them."

This is a good beginning. Each member of the Alliance is earnestly and affectionately exhorted to look at home: to examine himself, and see how far in his own conduct and bearing towards others he is helping forward or hindering the spirit of Christian Unity. The use of the Press is particularly referred to. Lamentable indeed are the exhibitions of uncharitable animosity, party spirit and vindictiveness, too frequently to be seen in books, pamphlets, reviews and newspapers, on the part of those who are the professed followers of Christ—Protestant and Romanist, Anglican and Nonconformist, and the members of one section or school of thought in the same denomination—one towards another. At these all must be grieved on account of the dishonour done to the name of our one Lord; the unbeliever scoffs and the world sneers. By such un-Christian effusions the advance of heaven's kingdom of righteousness, peace and joy among men is seriously hindered, and the great spiritual adversary triumphs. Were the thought of God's forbearance and mercy towards each one, of His will that His children should bear His image in this respect, and of Christ's own wonderful walk in love in the midst of a world which sharply criticised, misrepresented, despised, rejected and condemned Him with gross injustice, more often uppermost in the soul, these risings of a too sensitive spirit, of wounded vanity, of over self-esteem, and of a revengeful disposition, would be checked and suppressed by an earnest appeal to the all-sufficient restraining Grace of God. Then would the rule of the Master, so meek and lowly in heart, be seen to be the rule of the disciple. "When He was reviled, He reviled not again; when He suffered He threatened not, but committed Himself to Him that judgeth righteously."

Resolution II.—Prayer, private, family and social, for the Holy Spirit:

"That as the Christian union which this Alliance desires to promote can only be obtained through the blessed energy of the Holy Spirit, it be recommended to the members present, and absent brethren, to make this matter the subject of simultaneous weekly petition at the Throne of Grace, in their closets and families; and the forenoon of Monday is suggested as the time for that purpose. And that it be further recommended that the week beginning with the first Lord's-day of January, in each year, be observed by the members and friends of the Alliance throughout the world as a season for concert in prayer on behalf of the grand objects contemplated by the Alliance."

Here we are directed to the true source of all real spiritual unity, and the means of obtaining the power to maintain and promote it. The source is the Holy Spirit; the means of obtaining the needful grace is prayer. The children of God have all been baptised in one Spirit, *into one body*, and are all made to drink of *one Spirit*. They live or should live in the atmosphere of Divine love. In Him—the life-giving, life-sustaining, life-reviving, life-restoring Spirit—they live and move and have their being. They come like the thirsty animals of the wilderness, in all their natural variety of instinct and temperament to drink at the same stream flowing from the same source. The members of the Alliance may not always have been mindful of the Monday's prayer concert; but who shall say how far-reaching have been the effects of that observance of the New Year's Week of United Prayer in every land where the standard of Christ has been upraised? Where we thus gather together round the one Throne, how near (who here has not felt it?), in spite of

all our differences, have we been drawn to one another.

Resolution III.—Correction of Faults and Errors in others:

"That in seeking the correction of what the members of the Alliance believe to be wrong in others, they desire, in humble dependence on the grace of God, themselves to obey, and by their practice and influence to impress upon others, the command of Christ, to consider first the beam that is in their own eye: that they will, therefore, strive to promote, each in his own communion, a spirit of repentance and humiliation for its peculiar sins; and to exercise a double measure of forbearance in reproving, where reproof is needful, the faults of those Christian brethren who belong to other bodies than their own."

Here we are reminded that we may be conscientiously bound to take active steps towards correcting what we feel to be wrong in others. Even an inspired Apostle, in his care for a brother Apostle so much older than himself in the faith, and partaker of the same gifts of the Holy Spirit—so far from regarding him as infallible, withstood him to the face because he was to be blamed. In the passage of Scripture containing that wonderful summary of the second Table of the Law, adopted by our Lord as the basis of His golden rule, there is a distinct command to reprove an erring brother: "Thou shalt not hate thy brother in thine heart; thou shalt in anywise rebuke thy neighbour and not suffer sin upon him. Thou shalt not avenge nor bear any grudge against the children of thy people: but thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. I am the Lord." There should be a tender and loving readiness to pull out the mote from the brother's eye; and there will be in him who, with firm and determined hand, casts out the beam from his own. The warning is against self-satisfied and hypocritical officiousness. When sin is rightly estimated, and Christ-like love exists, there will be an equally strong desire to cast it out of the brother as of self. How would such a Christian and Apostolic spirit soften and sanctify the controversies which must arise from time to time in and among all communions of men not yet made perfect. At the outset of the chapter to the Corinthian Church, in which he sternly reproves those amongst them who needed such correction, St. Paul uses rather the language of entreaty, as he says, by the meekness and gentleness of Christ. What wisdom from above is needed to know when a holy vehemence is justly demanded; and when only the language of the tenderest entreaty should be used; when the thunder of denunciation, as "Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of hell"; and when the gentle voice of loving reproof, as, "Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of."

Resolution IV.—To avoid Rash and Groundless Insinuations, and Maintain Meekness and Gentleness:

"That when required by conscience to assert or defend any views or principles wherein they differ from Christian brethren who agree with them in vital truths, the members of this Alliance will aim earnestly, by the help of the Holy Spirit, to avoid all rash and groundless insinuations, personal imputations, or irritating allusions, and to maintain the meekness and gentleness of Christ, by speaking the truth only in love."

There is, indeed, ground for the maintenance of this amongst our other Resolutions. But in the controversies of the present day, I think, we may observe a great change, compared with those of former days. In this period of mental activity, and, thank God, of religious revival, there is not less controversy, perhaps, but some at least of the harshness, bitterness, and violence has gone, since the days of Martin Luther and John Knox, and of our own Cambridge Latimer, and others, since the Reformation. This changed tone was very distinctly marked at the late Lambeth Conference. Alluding to the last Papal Encyclical in their report, the Bishops, whose standpoint enables them in an especial manner to gauge the temper of the religious world, say: "Though controversy is rarely a method of promoting unity, there are grounds for thankfulness in the courteous tone in which much of this controversy has been conducted; in the abandonment by the Pope of much irrelevant and specious matter, which previously rendered discussion hopeless; in the limitation of the sphere of controversy to definite points; in a large amount of subsidiary literature, embodying the results of much research; and in the desire shown on both sides to understand and not consciously to misrepresent one another. If this spirit increases, even controversy will not have been in vain; and we wait the issue of such controversy with entire confidence."

But if much of the *Odium theologicum* of former days has vanished, is there not some room for fear lest a peace at any price principle may succeed, and precious and vital truth may be compromised and even sacrificed? The late Dean Goulburn, of Norwich, gave a warning note in this respect many years ago in his volume on the pursuit of Holiness.

"Christian love," he wrote, "is a very different thing from that indifference to theological error, which in these latitudinarian days too often apes its manners and mimics its phraseology. In lesser or doubtful points, not affecting the vitality of God's truth, our maxim must be *tolerance to the very utmost*—nay, more than tolerance, a *Catholic acknowledgment* of what is good and wise in other Christian Churches. But where the error mutilates the vital parts of the truth, then love can only appear in a form of hatred of evil. It is a very serious breach of love to pay compliments to false doctrine. Our Blessed Lord and His Apostles never did so." (*Pursuit of Holiness*, p. 155.)

"The wisdom that is from above," says St. James, the practical Apostle, "is first *pure*, then peaceable, gentle and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, without hypocrisy." (James iii. 17.)

Resolution V.—Not to Condemn as Indifferent to Christian Unity those who do not join the Alliance:

"That, while they believe it highly desirable that Christians of different bodies, holding the Head, should own each other as brethren by some such means as the Evangelical Alliance affords, the members of the Alliance disclaim the thought that those only who openly join the Society are sincere friends to the cause of Christian union: that, on the contrary, they regard all those as its true friends who solemnly purpose in their hearts, and fulfil that purpose in their practice, to be more watchful in future against occasions of

strife, more tender and charitable towards Christians from whom they differ, and more constant in prayer for the union of all the true disciples of Christ."

This pledges us to admit that such alliances as this are desirable for the public acknowledgment of our oneness in Christ; and our conviction that this oneness should be manifested by such a Union. At the same time, we are pledged by it to no narrow view, which excludes those who do not join such a union. Many others, it allows, may have the same strong desire for Christian Union, may be watchful against occasions of strife, exercising most kindly and charitable feelings towards those from whom they differ, and may really be one with us in our prayers for, the real union of all Christ's true disciples.

Resolution VI.—All Ministers and Conductors of Publications to use their positions of advantage to promote Unity:

"That the members of this Alliance would therefore invite, humbly and earnestly, all ministers of the Gospel, all conductors of religious publications, and others who have influence in various bodies of Christians, to watch more than ever against the sins of the heart, or the tongue, or the pen, towards Christians of other denominations, and to promote more zealously than hitherto a spirit of peace, unity, and godly love among all true believers in the Lord Jesus Christ."

This has special reference to the position of advantage which ministers and conductors of religious publications—as well as those in authority and possessing more than ordinary influence in various bodies of Christians—possess for the promotion of a spirit of peace, unity, and godly love amongst all true believers in Christ. The Incumbent of the Parish, the Pastor of the flock, the various Church officers, and Church and Christian workers—as well as the editors of newspapers, reviews, and periodicals—by their personal influence and example, have it, indeed, very greatly in their power to promote that spirit in their various spheres.

Resolution VII.—To pray especially for Nominal Christians and Jews:

"That, since all the disciples of Christ are commanded by the Holy Spirit to add to brotherly kindness love, and are bound to pray that all who profess and call themselves Christians should be led into the way of truth, it is earnestly recommended to the members of the Evangelical Alliance to offer special prayer for all merely nominal Christians, as well as for Jews and Gentiles throughout the world."

This Resolution again reminds us of the will of the Holy Spirit. He is the true Guide into all truth. Where He dwells in any heart there will be a more or less fervent desire for true communion and fellowship with others, standing on the same ground of His truth. Those who are merely nominal Christians will conceive no such desire. Their spirits are not in harmony with the Holy Spirit of God, and the spiritually-minded have no attractions for them. They have a name to live but are dead—cold, irresponsive to the overtures of the voice of the Spirit, indwelling and animating the souls who have the mind of Christ. For such we are urged in this Resolution to pray. Need I say more to commend this to you? How deadening the influence of merely nominal Christians in our congregations! What ice-blocks in the warm and genial atmosphere of Christian fellowship! What hindrances they are to the energising operations of the Holy Ghost! How great a stumbling-block to youthful followers of Christ in the glow of their first love! What tares amongst the wheat—hindering its growth and fruitfulness!

Resolution VIII.—To show sympathy with all Evangelical Missionaries:

"That the members of this Alliance, earnestly longing for the universal spread of Christ's Kingdom, devoutly praise God for the grace whereby, in late years, Evangelical Christians have been moved to manifold efforts to make the Saviour known to both Jew and Gentile, and faithful men have been raised up to undertake the toil. They would offer to all Evangelical Missionaries their most fraternal congratulations and sympathy; would hail the flocks they have been honoured to gather as welcome and beloved members of the household of God; and, above all, would implore the Head of the Church to shield His servants, to edify His rising Churches, and, by the outpouring of His Holy Spirit, to enlighten Israel with the knowledge of the true Messiah, and to bring the heathen out of darkness into light. They would also record their confident hope that their beloved missionary brethren will strive more and more to manifest before the Israelite and other classes who know not the Redeemer, that union in their blessed Lord, the spirit of which the members of this Alliance would gratefully acknowledge they have generally cherished."

This is a missionary resolution, and contains notes of praise as well as prayer. Thank God there is, indeed, ground for it. Whilst the fact still remains that one thousand millions of mankind are without the Church of Christ, there probably has never been, since the days of the Apostles, such a manifestation of the missionary spirit as in our own times. The vast numbers, rather increasing, who flock to the anniversary meetings of our societies in London; the ever-multiplying numbers of those who leave our shores annually for the mission field; the opening of doors long closed to the heralds of the Cross; the spirit of enquiry and willingness to hear the words of the Gospel amongst the heathen; the organisation of Christian Churches and the extension of Christ's Kingdom in every land and amongst all the peoples upon earth; all these are signs of the wonderful working of the Holy Spirit in the world; and we may read in them signs of the Lord's own coming again in person. The Gospel, said He, on the occasion of his predictions upon the Mount of Olives—"the Gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations, and then shall the end come." Nor in our outlook can we fail to observe the success of missionary enterprise amongst God's ancient people, and the movement (of which we have so lately heard something afresh) for regaining possession of their own land, and the restoration of their national life. Such thoughts will indeed commend this resolution to all who look for the coming of God's kingdom.

In addition to these subjects for praise is the testimony we so frequently have that the divisions, many of them unhappy divisions in our Christian community, at home, are not so marked in the

great mission field. The union of all in the one Lord is more manifest, and the representatives of our various denominations work side by side, if not in more intimate co-operation in the true spirit of Christian union, fellowship and love. Where the love of Christ has been shed abroad in the heart by the Holy Spirit, and where there is a single eye to the advancement of His kingdom and glory in the winning of souls to Him, there those who differ upon many secondary points are powerfully drawn towards each other in the bonds of Christian union, fellowship, and love. Their Lord and Master is one and the same; their aim one and the same; their methods may vary somewhat, but the work in which they are engaged is one; its difficulties, its discouragements, its trials, its dangers, its hardships, and its blessed results, have so much in common that sympathy and brotherly affection naturally spring up amongst them, and they labour side by side in generous and loving rivalry for the furtherance and success of the Gospel of peace.

And surely we have some reason to be thankful that, whether as a result of this Alliance or not, a renewed spirit of unity is being manifested amongst us at home. A remarkable testimony is borne to this in the Report of the Lambeth Conference, to which I have alluded. Permit me to read it. It is under the head of "Church Unity with other Christian bodies." The members of that Conference say: "We speak as brothers to those Christian brothers who are separated from us. We can assure them that we fail not in love and respect for them. We acknowledge with a full heart the fruits of the Holy Ghost produced by their lives and labours. We remember the fact, so glorious for them, that in evil days they kept up the standard at once of family virtue, and of the life hidden with Christ in God. We can never forget that lessons of holiness and love have been written upon undying pages by members of their communions, and that the lips of many of their teachers have been touched with heavenly fire. We desire to know them better, to join with them in works of charity. We are more than willing to help to prevent needless collisions or unwise duplication of labour. We know that many among them are praying, like many of ourselves, that the time may be near for the fulfilment of our Master's prayer that 'they all may be one.' Surely in the unseen world there is a pulsation of joy among the redeemed. Some mysterious word has gone forth among them that Christ's army, still on earth, long broken into fragments by bitter dissensions, is stirred by a Divine impulse to regain the loving brotherhood of the Church's youth. May we labour on in the deathless hope that, while in the past, unity without truth has been destructive, and truth without unity feeble, now in our own day truth and unity combined may be strong enough to subdue the world to Christ; and the muse of the Church's history may no longer be *hate* but *love*." May He grant us (in Bishop Jeremy Taylor's words) "uniting principles, reconciled hearts, and an external communion in His own good season." Time ripens; thought softens; love has a tender subtlety of interpretation. Controversy in the past has been too much the grave of Charity. We have much to confess, and not a little to learn.

Foreign Intelligence.

FRANCE.

(From our own Correspondent).

PARIS, December 15, 1897.

WE mentioned in our last letter the consecration of the ex-abbot Bourrier, who has left the Roman Catholic Church in order to obey his conscience. He gives the following as his reasons for the change: "Of course the light did not come all at once; there were fights and anguishes, alternatives of victories and defeats. But finally conscience has vanquished, and I have had the strength to break the strongest and dearest ties of flesh and blood. But this breaking was not all; my conscience was wanting a country, my Christian heart, a family; I could not live without a church. It is but slowly and by different steps, that I have come into the Reformed Church of France. There I have found the two great principles necessary to any Christian belief: *the authority of the Gospel; and justification through faith, as the only means of salvation.* There I find the spiritual religion, the religion of the Gospel, seized by the conscience, what Luther has so well called *the conscience bound by the word of God.* Then I came to you, and soon I felt myself in a new country; I was no more an exile." There is a religious work in connexion with this movement not much known but which does and has been doing for a long time, without noise, with prudence and fidelity, among real difficulties, a great deal of good—we mean the work among the priests, which deserves our warmest interest. It does no propaganda whatever, and neglects nothing in order to eliminate the unworthy ones; but it affords help to the priests

whom their conscience forces out from the Roman Church. This work has borne its fruits; several former priests are to-day at work, in different parts of France, for the evangelisation of our country; lately some of them were gathered in the West in order to thank an old Huguenot, M. Bertrand, director of the work, for having assisted them in becoming also Huguenots themselves. Pastor Bourrier said lately to the publisher of one of our Protestant papers that more than 100 priests are actually impatient to shake off the yoke of Rome, not at all under the attraction of a worldly life, but only because they long to free their consciences, communicating directly with God by Jesus Christ, and desirous to join the Church of the Reformation.

The Society of the History of French Protestantism has held this year its assembly in the Temple of Meaux (Seine et Oise), a place full of remembrances fitting it for such an honour. Two banners were hung on the walls of the sanctuary, bearing the names of the fourteen martyrs burnt in the Market Place at Meaux, in 1546. The glorious past of the church, and of all the region there about, was retraced by Pastor Weiss, secretary of the Society. The cup used in the first Protestant assemblies for the celebration of the Holy Communion, presented also to some martyrs just before their food, was also exhibited. The whole ceremony aroused much interest and emotion.

A series of special meetings for consecration and mutual edification have been held lately at Paris in the Wesleyan Chapel, Rue Roquépine, and have certainly been doing much good to most of the decided Christians attracted by them. Pastor Tophel, from Geneva, the venerated missionary, F. Coillard, MM. Th. Monod, Appia, Vinard, &c., took an active part in the meetings, and have certainly moved many hearts and consciences. These meetings followed the day of pastoral retreat, when the principal subject was: "The preacher of to-day and what he ought to be." The exposition of this important question, made by well-known Pastor Roger Hollard, has been highly appreciated. The preacher must have a great likeness to Christ, both by a continual communion with his Lord and with humanity, whatever efforts this communion implies; only then he will have the power of Christ Himself. The preacher added: "In presence of this ideal, we fall down in the dust in thinking of our infidelities; but let an ardent prayer accompany our humiliation and require of God all the energies of his Holy Spirit, in order to make of us better preachers of the Gospel."

"Faith and Life" (*La foi et la vie*), such is the name of a new Protestant review which will appear every fortnight in the coming year. Its chief object is to study religious and theological questions, without being hostile to any party, but in keeping an attitude before all Evangelicals and to spread a current of real life and Christian faith among its readers.

Besides the great hospitals scattered in all the quarters of Paris, there were until now very few houses for the Protestant sick children of the poor class, none at all for the boys. This want has been recently filled up by the opening of a comfortable home inaugurated at Neuilly at the beginning of the month; there boys and girls, grouped according to their age and the nature of their sickness, will be nursed as in a large family in which a young deaconess takes the place of the mother. Any little patient, except those suffering from chronic diseases, will be received there, quite freely; and—an innovation dear to many—the mothers may come every day to visit their children.

A Protestant Church in the Rue St. Denis, Paris, has received lately among its members a young man whose religious experience is a curious and interesting one. He has been in search of Christian perfection in a Roman Catholic convent; but after two years of noviciate and one year of temporary vows, he has left the cloister, where he endured a life of excessive fatigues, without finding the peace his heart was longing after. Meeting with an ex-priest who has now become a pastor in the Reformed Church, our friend found in Protestantism what he had not succeeded in finding before. He has thus joined one of our Churches, and earns his living by his labour.

The venerated President of the Consistory of Paris for the Reformed Church, Pastor Louis Vernes, has given in his resignation to the Church Council, of which he has been the conductor during forty-six years. His son, who has assisted him in this charge during twenty years, will be called to be his successor. This decision

has been announced to the Consistory in the end of November; but he has consented to continue his functions until the end of March, when the elections will take place.

We read with great pleasure in the *Journal des Missions* that the Ministry of Public Instruction has subscribed for fifty copies of the book written by Missionary F. Christol, "In South Africa," which will be placed in the popular circulating libraries. We are happy that such a mark of goodwill has been given to a book with a character essentially missionary, and that it will be introduced into quite new circles.

GERMANY.

(*From our own Correspondent.*)

BERLIN, Dec. 15, 1897.

ALL the Synods of the different national Protestant Churches of Prussia have been assembled now at the same time. The largest of these bodies, the General Synod of the Evangelical Church of the old Prussian provinces, only meets every six years—but exceptionally an extraordinary sitting had taken place three years ago for the new liturgy. The reason why all these synods were invoked at the same period is that a new law on the income of the clergy is to be passed for the whole kingdom. Last year the salaries of the officials in Prussia and the Empire were raised. The Prussian House of Deputies therefore passed resolutions last year that the clergymen ought also to be raised in their income. The present system, since the ministry of Dr. Falk, is that the State adds to the clergymen what is missing to their income, according to their age. After five years of service the pastor is to have at least 2,400 marks; later 3,000 marks. A few years ago the maximum was increased to 3,600 marks. The Government now proposes a quite different system. All livings with an income of 5,000 marks are to remain exempt from this law. All other lands, &c., belonging to the pastorate go into the property of the Church, or the congregation, which has to pay the salary to the clergyman, beginning, as hitherto, at 1,800 marks for the first five years, but increasing up to 4,800 marks. In order to enable this, where the congregation are not able to do so, the State gives, not additions to each clergyman who is in want of the necessary income, as hitherto, but one sum to the Churches. The changes which this will bring are very considerable. The salaries are undoubtedly raised—this is one benefit. The fund given to the Churches is given as one sum to them collectively: this is a second common bond between the different Protestant Churches of Prussia. The fund will be administered by a Committee of Delegates from the different Synods. As the income of the clergymen now quite systematically increases according to his age, he will no more have to look out for better livings. The pastor is furthermore relieved from the administration of the land. It is true that the land in many cases gave him a kind of liberty from the peasants. He has his own milk and butter, &c., and is not dependent on them. Besides, it often put him in possession of horses, which facilitated his moving about. But, on the other hand, the pastor generally has no agricultural experience; he was therefore often in great difficulty how to obtain the income due to him from the lands. If they were let, he had to defend his own interests, which is also a disagreeable position for him. The congregations will better be able to make most of the land, and the pastor will dedicate his whole interest and time to the spiritual work. The Synod of Schleswig Holstein was the first to assent, with 68 against 19 votes. Also the vote of the other Synods is no more doubtful.

Another Bill which occupied all the Synod was on the education of the ministry. The Government has now provided seminaries for candidates in all the provinces, and especially after all the various inward conflicts into which our students are brought by modern theology, a good practical training is indispensable. This is to be secured partly in those seminaries, partly by being attached to an experienced minister, who is to introduce the candidates into parish work. This Bill found no opposition.

Besides these things, a great many others were treated, by proposition emanating from members. For instance, all Synods voted a unanimous protest

against the Canisius-Encyclical of the Pope, in which he had called the reformation a poison and Luther a revolutionary man. The vote of the General Synod is to be read from all pulpits.

The question of the Universities was also discussed, and the earnest desire expressed that the great gulf now existing between the Church and the Universities might be done away with. Though nobody can wish to abolish liberty of science, professors ought not to forget that they have to educate the student for the ministry of the Gospel.

The question of evangelisation was also treated in some of the Synods; in Berlin rather favourably. Less so in Schleswig-Holstein, where a large home mission society is doing a great work, and where the exclusively Lutheran pastors offer great opposition. We trust that many of these difficulties will be overcome in the course of time. At present we must fight for our liberty—not the formal one, which our law or association fully secures, but for that moral one, which teaches Christians to allow other Christians to work freely according to their own principles. We have still many pastors who believe that nothing may be done in their parish without their consent. As soon as this liberty is fully acknowledged those who evangelise will seek to keep up the best relations with other Christian workers.

The Berlin General Synod then passed a warm vote of sympathy for the Armenian Christians. This vote will help to further the collections in the winter for those sufferers. The General Synod further voted the building of a church at Dar-es-Salaam, East Africa, and recognised the duty of the National Church to care for the Germans in our colonies. This will relieve our missionary societies, and enable them to give their whole time to the native heathen.

ITALY.

At last the political orations delivered under the auspices of the Ultramontane party in Italy in various Churches at the Congresses (Congressi Eucharistichi) have compelled the Government to issue a mandate virtually forbidding the continuance of such proceedings. It was in vain that the Bishop of Cremona protested against profanation of the sacred edifices, to what were really secular ends. At the last Conference the absence of that functionary was most unsparingly criticised, and his views more or less reprobated.

The frequent organisation of pilgrimages to various places appears to have reached its climax recently, when it is asserted that 14,000 individuals, under the supervision of the priesthood, made a pilgrimage to a certain holy spot in the diocese of Pisa. Lucca furnished this multitude of devotees. The question naturally arises, was this intended to be a demonstration as well as an act of religious devotion? In any case, it is clear that the meetings in the Churches in which not only the clergy, but also laymen, addressed hundreds from the pulpit, have been of a sufficiently political character to compel the Government to require the various syndics of communes to forbid the sacred edifices being used for such purposes in the future. It will be interesting to note whether the priests have sufficient influence in the Communal Councils to defy the Government orders.

The re-opening for the year of the Theological College of the Episcopal Methodists in Rome was one promising good success. Besides the members of the Faculty, the Rev. Mr. Piggott and others took part in the proceedings. Professor Tollis pronounced the inaugural discourse, taking as his text Romans v. 14. Dr. Burt, President of the Council of the School of Theology, addressed himself especially to the students. He urged upon them to consider the grave responsibility which now rested upon them, seeing that they had resolved to give themselves to the sacred ministry. They had before them a solemn duty—that of serving the Lord. He exhorted them to have a single eye to the glory of God, and added that without His blessing their labour would be in vain. It was announced that eight students in theology were attending already, and that nine were undergoing preparatory studies with a view of entering upon the full and final course. Sig. Calvino, of the Waldensian Church, concluded with prayer.

The new building opened recently by this same body at San Marzano will

doubtless further the cause of Gospel light and truth. It is situated in an excellent position, and is handsome and spacious. Close to it is a large hall or room wherein meets the school. Above is an apartment for the pastor.—K.F.D.

BELGIUM.

THE deficit on the Evangelical work in Belgium, although not so disquieting as a short time ago, yet gives considerable cause for anxiety. There have been sent in to the Committee, however, sums of money which cheer and encourage the managers and pastors in the work, and it is to be hoped that the needs of the various enterprises which make an imperative demand upon the funds, will be met in such a way as that there shall be no need of curtailment. Only those who see the openings, groups of enquirers in various places, know how trying it is not to be able to respond to the cry "Come over and help us."

The messages which have accompanied various donations have been most heart cheering. From the anonymous donor of 5,000 francs, to the widow's mite of two francs, hearty good wishes and prayers for an abundant blessing have accompanied the gifts. There is much need for prayer among the adherents and friends of the cause both at home and abroad. Brethren, pray for us! It is also with very considerable anxiety that we look forward to filling up the vacancies caused by death or removals. Seven changes of one kind or another have required filling up recently.

During the past summer excellent assistance has been afforded us through the temporary services of several devoted young men, some students in theology, and destined some for the ministry, and one at least for the foreign mission field. These came from Neuchatel, Geneva, the Canton de Vaud, the University at Utrecht, and from the University at Leyden, respectively. These young men have been most helpful in filling up gaps, when during the past summer some regular pastors have been absent for change and rest, or have been obliged to desist from their labours for a time from a strain of work, or ill health.

Among the agricultural labourers of Brabant it is noteworthy that a growing discontent, and almost a feeling of positive revulsion, exists towards the Romish Church. Indeed, it may be said that the men take a pride in avowing themselves Socialists. The women also not infrequently assert that they are atheists. This arises, as may be imagined, from the pretensions and superstition of the clergy. Nevertheless, the latter have still many sheep in their fold. Still the opening up of the Scriptures to some Roman Catholics who will listen, is as the sound of a well-tuned instrument. Such will purchase a Bible or New Testament, and give proof that the truth has made them free.

The extensive province of Namur is very largely Romanistic, and it is here, as, indeed, in some other parts of Belgium, that the labours of a colporteur or evangelist are needed. There are many Protestants who, separated by considerable distances from any sympathisers, depend wholly on their Bible for instruction, and on the comfort of the great Comforter who is always with them. In such cases, how great a boon it is to receive a visit from a brother in Christ. Six stations, where only a few believers are to be met with, have been visited lately, the visitant being as it were an angel of light in the midst of a dark place. It demands great faith and courage to continue the work in some parts of the province of Namur, where the Roman clergy, clerical proprietors and burgomasters, or mayors, do all they can to force the people, who are very poor, to destroy their Bible if they happen to have one, and get them, either by bribes or threats, to cease attending evangelical services. When such are instituted, groups of forty, sixty, eighty people come together time after time, and these audiences dwindle away until only the faithful few are left. It is painful to record that assistance from the public funds of a commune destined to relieve the needy and distressed, are refused to such if they are known to be Protestants. In spite of all, however, the glad tidings of peace make way. A good number of New Testaments are sold every month and read, some secretly and some openly. Much prayer is asked for the colporteurs in Belgium, especially those working in the province of Namur.

AUSTRALIA.

THE PROGRESS OF METHODIST UNION IN AUSTRALASIA.

It is not often we are favoured with a letter for publication from any of our Australian correspondents, but we are glad to insert the following communication from the Rev. W. F. James, an old friend of the Alliance—formerly of Cardiff, but now of Glenville, South Australia:—

The Rev. Samuel Leigh, the first Australasian Methodist minister, was sent from England in response to an urgent appeal from a few Wesleyans of New South Wales. He was on his voyage when the Battle of Waterloo was fought in 1815; he laboured with apostolic zeal and heroism in the Mother Colony and New Zealand, and lived to see Methodism well established in the Southern World. Since the formation of the Australasian Conference in 1855, the Methodist Missions of the Pacific Isles have been under its control, and their success is wonderful. The Primitive Methodists began their colonial work in 1840, and the Bible Christians ten years later. Subsequently the United Methodist Free Churches and the Methodist New Connexion sent ministers. The last-named section only planted Churches in Melbourne and Adelaide; and, nine years ago, they were incorporated with the Wesleyan and Bible Christian Churches. The other three minor Methodist denominations have maintained a separate existence. Methodism followed the course of settlement, had romantic experiences, and has now a network of agencies throughout the seven colonies. Roughly speaking, the Bible Christian Church is twice the size of the United Methodist Free Churches; the Primitive Methodist Church has double the strength of the Bible Christian Church; and Minor Methodism has about one-fourth the membership of Wesleyan Methodism, including the members in the mission-field. Altogether, in the Southern World, Methodism has about 1,000 ministers, 6,000 local preachers, 3,600 churches, 11 colleges, 110,000 members, and 550,000 adherents. The usefulness and prospects of Methodism in Australasia were thus indicated by the Right Hon. S. J. May, P.C., at the late British Wesleyan Conference: "If they could take the gold and silver strands of Methodist teaching and friendship, and of Methodist citizenship, it would be a glorious sight. In another century the population of Australasia would probably reach 60,000,000. The Mission of Methodism was of the utmost importance to the Southern World. Politicians were seeking to federate the Colonies, Methodists were engaged in the task of United Methodism; . . . and he could not doubt that United Methodism had before it greater capacity and greater opportunities for usefulness, and still more abundant success than it had had in the past."

The divisions of Methodism have been a serious drawback. As the gentleman, just quoted, said at the great demonstration in favour of Methodist Union in Melbourne two years ago: "We profess the same doctrine, we share the same experience, our modes of worship and of working are the same, but we are divided—and weakened by being divided—into four separate denominations. Waste of money, diminished influence, overlapping, undue rivalry, are the consequences of these divisions, which every one of us regret, which at one time were unavoidable, but which now cannot be excused, and are becoming a reproach."

Upwards of fifty years ago the germ of the Australasian Methodist Union was planted in the mind of a child in New Zealand. The child, though but six years old, dimly perceived the unwisdom of divisions in Colonial Methodism. "The child was father to the man"—the Rev. Edwin J. Watkin, D.D.—who has wrought hard and effectively for many years to promote Methodist union. But the germ developed slowly and without observation. Over twenty years after the incident alluded to, the late Rev. George Daniels could not find a seconder for his resolution in favour of Methodist union in the Victorian Wesleyan Conference. Gradually it became the theme of private conversation, but for a long time little was said about it in Church courts. The expressed readiness of the South Australian Bible Christian Conference in 1881, to confer with other Methodist Churches, with a view to some form of union, bore no immediate fruit. But the same year the Wesleyan Methodist General Conference declared "in the interest of Christian charity, and in the hope of economising the energies of the various Methodist Churches, its

readiness to consider any well-devised scheme that might come before it for effecting a union of those Churches." Bases of union were formed in Victoria and New Zealand within the next year or two, though little substantial progress was made. In 1884 the Wesleyan General Conference pronounced in favour of union upon the general principles of the Canadian basis. This deliverance of the Supreme Legislative Court of the Chief Methodist Church gave great encouragement to the numerous friends of union, and the consummation seemed not very far distant. Alas! the prospect clouded during the next few years. Despairing of full Methodist union, an attempt was made to bring about minor Methodist union, but it did not succeed, and the desire for complete unification came into bolder relief than ever. The Wesleyan General Conference of 1888 deemed it desirable that there should be more fellowship and co-operation between the different branches of Methodism. Years rolled on without apparent progress. The Wesleyan General Conference of 1890 did not adopt any resolution on the subject. But the ardent friends of union encouraged one another with hopeful words, and felt assured the right sentiment was quietly growing. A Committee of laymen in South Australia fostered the sentiment in the province.

The Methodist Œcumenical Conferences of 1881 and 1891, held in London and Washington respectively, revealed the essential oneness of Methodism, indicated the waste caused by its sectional working, and intensified the desire for organic union. The third day of the second conference witnessed the most remarkable desire for union that had ever appeared. The pastoral address to Methodists throughout the world was immediately telegraphed for publication in 800 newspapers. It hailed the growing spirit of unity, and said, "Our ecclesiastical principles are not so various as the forms in which they are accidentally embodied." It counselled closer co-operation, and stated that "before the eyes of many of us passes the delightful vision of a time when, in each land where it is planted, Methodism shall become, for every useful purpose, one, and the Methodism of the world shall be a close federation of Churches for the spread of the kingdom of Christ." All this told upon the Methodist world, especially upon the Australasian sections, and revived the discussion, which yearly grew in interest.

Just as news of the second Œcumenical Conference reached the colonies, a Wesleyan district synod in New South Wales adopted resolutions in favour of union. About the same time, a unique Convention was held in Adelaide. Twenty-two representatives of the three Methodist Churches of the colonies discussed union for five hours. The Convention was as harmonious as a typical Methodist Love Feast. With a single dissentient, a series of minutes favouring union was carried. A report of the Convention was sent to scores of secular and religious journals in various colonies. Nearly all of them published articles or paragraphs on the subject, and, with one exception, all pronounced in favour of union. The echoes of that memorable Convention have not died away yet.

A pamphlet, showing the success of Methodist union in Canada, and pleading for union throughout Australasia, was sent to every Methodist minister in each colony. It excited much attention and served a good purpose. Every one of the sixteen annual Conferences pronounced in favour of union, despite stern opposition in some of them. Five bases of union were prepared by joint Committees in the seven colonies. In 1894, the Wesleyan General Conference, after a vigorous debate, in which thirty-two speeches were delivered, by 101 to 14 votes adopted resolutions in favour of union. It defined the constitutional basis upon which the Wesleyan Church was prepared to unite with other Methodist Churches; it authorised each annual Conference to bring about union within its bounds as early as practicable, and directed the formation of Federal Councils to hasten its approach. A memorable scene occurred when the vote was taken. A spectator said he would gladly have travelled ten thousand miles to be present. One by one, with a single exception, the various Courts of Minor Methodism, by large majorities, agreed to union upon the basis adopted by the Wesleyan General Conference, and obtained permission from their respective British Conferences to proceed to the desired consummation. There were reverses in the movement, but they were as receding waves upon a flowing tide.

The desirability of union being almost universally admitted, and the constitu-

tional aspect settled, only practical difficulties remained. In 1895 there was a general interchange of pulpits, and demonstrations in favour of union were held in twenty-three centres of population. Thus waves of enthusiasm spread throughout Australasia. Meanwhile thousands of hours were occupied in gathering statistics, preparing schemes of union, &c. The Conferences of 1896 agreed to refer the schemes to the people for their consideration. By overwhelming majorities the people voted favourably. Organic union has been effected between the Wesleyan, Free Methodist, and Bible Christian Churches in New Zealand, and it succeeds well. Union will be consummated in Queensland next January. In South and West Australia union has been formed in some districts, and will probably be generally consummated in 1899, or the following year. Victoria and Tasmania will no doubt follow in 1902, and New South Wales then, or somewhat later.

The most serious difficulty is in connexion with the Ministers' Superannuation Funds; and it arises from the great strength of the Wesleyan Fund, the comparative feebleness of the funds in the other Churches, and the fact that some minor Methodist ministers are not at all, or have but a slender connexion with any Superannuation Fund. But this and lesser practical differences will no doubt be overcome, and there is every prospect, before many years have passed, of the various sections of Australasian Methodism becoming a unit; and, in the interests of the commonwealth, and our common Christianity, that is a consummation to be devoutly wished.

Leaders in other sections of the one great Church of Christ have taken and continue to show the deepest interest in the Methodist union movement; and many letters have been received by the writer from eminent men in various Churches warmly approving the uniting together of these Methodist bodies; among those who have thus expressed themselves are the Archbishop of Australia and the Bishop of Adelaide.

THE ARMENIAN CHRISTIANS.

From letters received during the past two months from our numerous correspondents in Asia Minor, in Persia, and in Cyprus, we give the following extracts, which we know will be of interest to our readers:—

Bardezag.—Our friend writes: "I am sorry to say the state of the country shows no improvement. The restrictions on travel to which the Christians have been subjected for about two years, are becoming even more vexatious. Respect for law and order has almost entirely disappeared; and, owing to the spirit of bold lawlessness which is spreading, trade is at a standstill. Our little Protestant communities are, with the country in general, growing poorer. We have been compelled to dismiss teacher after teacher and to leave struggling communities without preachers. In the field where I am the sole male missionary, there is an accessible population of 70,000 souls. We have 2,000 Protestant adherents, of whom 432 are communicants. The contributions of our poor people amounted last year to £1,756; while the sum which the American Board was able to appropriate for the educational and evangelistic work in this field last year was only £425. Never has the missionary in Turkey been called upon to bear so heavy a heart and so light a purse as at the present time. The opportunities for missionary effort are overwhelming. Our schools are overcrowded, our teachers and preachers overworked, and the piteous appeal of uncared for thousands ever dinning in our ears. Still, our trust is in God, and we rejoice in the sympathy and help which His people in all lands extend to us." Mr. Chambers also encloses encouraging details regarding useful work in the Bithynia High School for Boys and in the Bardezag Orphanage.

Van.—Relief and orphanage work at Van forms the subject of a painfully interesting report. "Had there been any disposition on the part of the Government to secure the reforms and protection absolutely essential to a return of prosperity, of which disposition no evidence has yet materialised, the mischievous activity of the misguided revolutionary agitators on the border has been quite sufficient to postpone its realisation. Even a current of reviving business for the community at large would leave hundreds of widows and thousands of orphans still stranded, and it

would take years for the tide to rise high enough to bear them on its bosom; so that unless our industrial work or something equivalent can be continued for several years, these classes will suffer even after prosperity begins. Not only widows and orphans but able-bodied men are helpless. Precarious employment in fields and gardens furnishing bare living for some of these during the summer, leaves a desperate look out for the approaching winter. A scanty harvest and rising price for grain is another source of trouble. The population look with dread to the coming season, and the committee prophecy a harder winter than the two preceding. As to the work of the past three months, the greatest possible care has been exercised in the dispensing of funds available for industrial occupation and relief. The department has, nevertheless, expended 862 lires for cotton and wool, and 445 L. for the extra yarns spun, thus supplying the means of subsistence to over 5,000 persons who, so far as we can see, would otherwise have remained entirely without support. It is impossible that the summer rate of help can meet the needs of the winter. The money designated especially for the orphanage is not yet exhausted, and provision for a few years is promised for 150 children, but the remainder of funds in hand will barely suffice to keep the rest of the children until they can properly be sent out to care for themselves. General funds have received hardly any addition during the summer; and the grain laid in for the winter's use, much less than last year, involved a debt of nearly 500 L. to the orphanage funds."

HADJIN.—We have pathetic details of accompaniments to work for God among orphaned little ones. Early in the year eight orphan girls were taken into one family. When school closed, most of them were sent home for the summer, in a few cases receiving clothes enough to last until their return in September. Then a house was rented in the town, and other destitute girls were sheltered, until, from among the four hundred very poor orphans in Hadjin itself and the needy ones in surrounding villages, one hundred youthful sufferers have been selected for the benefits of a Christian home. A godly man is also exercising like care for some of the destitute Armenian boys. More poverty stricken and wretched children than those of Hadjin could not be found, and substantial help for their succour is urgently needed.

OROOMIAH.—In various ways too numerous to mention, our correspondent is helping the Armenian refugees at Oroomiah, in Persia, of whom there are about 6,100 persons scattered in the various villages. He says: "We are now supplying all who have ploughs with as much seed as our funds will permit. We still have to furnish some, especially new comers, with bedding, clothing, and food for the crippled and sick who cannot work. Large numbers of sick have died, and our dispensaries have been crowded. Many even yet are sleeping out of doors, with nothing to protect them from the chilly nights. A short time ago, an order came from the capital of this province, that all Turkish subjects were to remove to the interior, as border bands of revolutionists had made raids into Turkey, inflicting severe losses upon Kurds. After much correspondence and anxiety, we were able to get the order rescinded as far as it concerned this place, we showing that our people were peaceable settlers. In Salmas, where the order was carried out, great distress prevailed, and many deaths took place from hunger, cold, and sickness. The needs for the winter are very great. The seed sown will not be reaped until July; and in the interval there will be no work to speak of. Many who have secured a home, have nothing laid up for the winter; and the furnishing of work or subsistence for them will be a heavy tax upon our resources. We therefore depend upon the continued kindness and generosity of those who have helped in the past."

CYPRUS.—Writing from Nicosia, a friend says: "Thanks to the grant kindly contributed by the Evangelical Alliance and the generosity of friends, I have now been able for nearly a year to attend to the bodily needs of the Armenian refugees here, chiefly by providing occupation. The larger number of these refugees belong to the Gregorian Church; but among those from Diarbekir, Aintab, and Marash, were numbers of Protestants for whom there was no teaching here in their own language. They were as sheep without a shepherd, just at a time when the comforting ministrations of the Gospel were most required. Indeed, so depressed and demoralized have some of the refugees become under their calamities and destitution, that several, influenced by promised reward, have apostatised and

turned Moslem, under the very ægis of the British flag. About two months ago, Luther, a graduate of the American College at Aintab, whose name was down on the death-roll, fled to Cyprus, and, in answer to my enquiries, agreed to give his services temporally as a lay preacher. Services, including a Sunday-school, were accordingly commenced, much to the delight of the refugees. I can never forget how eagerly they drank in the words of the 122nd Psalm. The co-operation of friends will be welcomed in securing the permanent services of a pastor for this increasing congregation.* Not only will the refugees benefit, but also the few Armenian Protestants who have been for years in the island, but were not sufficiently numerous to form a Church; and, as the services are conducted in the Turkish language, an opportunity will also be given for enquiring Moslems to listen to the truth." In a later communication we have full particulars of receipts and expenditure connected with work on behalf of the Armenian sufferers in Nicosia up to Oct. 2. "Much has been done in finding employment for refugees in the various departments of the silk industry: the sorting of silk cocoons, pruning of mulberry trees and other work in connexion with the 'Silk School' having furnished occupation for a large number of men and women. Other help has taken the form of renting shops to start refugees in business, and loans for beginning or developing work. The original decision to assist the refugees by providing them with work has been adhered to as far as possible. The result is that several are settling down and bringing their families to join them. With some, of course, work has proved a test and shown their unworthiness. The funds intrusted to me are now exhausted, while there is still much distress."

BRIEF NOTICES OF BOOKS.

The Leisure Hour and the Sunday at Home. Religious Tract Society.

THESE two volumes of over 800 pages each are handsomely bound in cloth, and contain several coloured plates. There are from 300 to 400 illustrations, many of these being finely printed reproductions of pictures by well-known artists. *The Sunday at Home*, in addition to its serial tales and short stories, contains many interesting and useful papers, as well as Scripture-studies and sermons. The "Notes of the Month" are also an interesting feature of this magazine. *The Leisure Hour* is not at all behind its companion volume in interest. Here, again, we have the inevitable serial stories, as well as biographical and other sketches, papers upon travel, and historical or other questions, with "Continental Notes." There are also sketches taken from the Midland counties and from Ireland. The astronomical notes, and other scientific or natural history papers, are of considerable merit.

The Story of John G. Paton. Hodder & Stoughton.

THIS is a fourth edition of the interesting volume which we have already reviewed in these columns. It has been re-arranged and edited by the brother of the well-known missionary, principally for the young folks, being abbreviated from the larger edition. It is a book of thrilling interest.

William Taylor, of California. Hodder & Stoughton.

AN English edition of the remarkable autobiography of Bishop Taylor. The Rev. C. G. Moore, in a prefatory note, says he has selected those portions of the original work edited by Dr. Ridpath, which he thought likely to be most interesting to English readers; and the charm of the book is, that Bishop Taylor is left to tell his story in his own way. We have the Bishop's experiences in California, in the old States of America, in Canada and Australia, in South Africa, in the East and West Indies, in South America, and, lastly, in his African episcopate. Altogether it is a volume of deep interest, and especially to any who met Bishop Taylor during his visits to this country.

Personal Friendships of Jesus. By the Rev. J. R. MILLER, D.D. Hodder & Stoughton.

HERE we have another of those beautiful devotional works with which the name of Dr. Miller is so closely associated. Starting with the proposition that nothing reveals a man's heart better than his friendships, the writer goes on to show that the personal friendships of Jesus Christ revealed many tender and beautiful things in His character. They show us, also, what is possible for us in Divine friendship. All who are familiar with Dr. Miller's writings will welcome this new volume.

A Gentle Heart. By the Rev. J. MILLER, DD. Hodder & Stoughton.

A LITTLE booklet of thirty-one pages, based upon the text, "Thy gentleness hath made me great." It is attractive in appearance as well as in the contents.

The House we live in. By W. J. GORDON. Religious Tract Society.

ONE of the "Leisure Hour Library" series, and deals with a variety of matters relating to the material building of our dwellings. It will interest boys and others of a mechanical turn of mind.

* The funds required for this object have since been provided by the Council of the Evangelical Alliance.

The Rise and Spread of Christianity in Europe. By W. H. Summers. Religious Tract Society. One of the "Present Day Primers," and treats of the overthrow of Paganism under the Cross, the sceptre, and the sword. The writer himself says that this little handbook is an attempt to set forth, in a comprehensive form, the struggle between the Gospel of Christ and the various Pagan systems which it encountered and defeated in the continent of Europe. We may very safely say of this work, *multum in parvo*.

How to study Wild Flowers. By the Rev. George Henslow. Religious Tract Society. This handbook is, as the author states, written with the object of enabling students to rapidly acquire an accurate knowledge of typical British wild flowers, and is specially adapted for the use of schools and private students. It contains many beautiful illustrations.

The Zenana; or, Woman's Work in India. S. W Partridge & Co. The fourth volume of the monthly magazine of the Zenana Bible & Medical Mission. The book itself is handsomely got up, and contains numerous illustrations. All who are interested in Christian work among the women of India, will find this volume one of considerable value. It contains information and notes on various subjects which give it an interest beyond the mere society itself.

Music for the Soul. Hodder & Stoughton. An arrangement of daily readings for a year, from the writings of the Rev. Alexander Maclaren, D.D.; and when we mention his name we do not need to say that this book of devotional reading will be found a valuable help to those who are seeking to live in communion with God. It is not intended to be used instead of the Word of God, but along with it. The selection of extracts is arranged by the Rev. George Coates. Dr. Maclaren, in his pulpit utterances, speaks in a manly and straightforward style, especially adapted to the business men of to-day. The book is beautifully printed and handsomely bound. One specially valuable feature is a carefully prepared index of subjects.

Evangelical Alliance.

THE WEEK OF UNIVERSAL PRAYER.

JANUARY 2—9, 1898.

We have already given in our columns the full programme of subjects for the Week of Universal Prayer; and we would again express the earnest hope that, in all parts of our own country as well as in other lands, Christian people will be found attending the meetings in large numbers, and that a real spirit of prayer may prevail throughout the whole week.

Then we would remind our friends that it is always helpful to receive reports of the observance of the Week of Prayer, and especially any incidents concerning the meetings that may be held. We would therefore ask that early reports be sent to the General Secretary of the Evangelical Alliance, 7 Adam Street, Strand, London.

We append a list of the central meetings convened by the Council of the Evangelical Alliance, and which are held daily in St. Martin's Town Hall, Charing Cross, commencing on Monday, Jan. 3, at 11.30 each morning. The following is the programme of chairmen and speakers, together with the outline of the subject for each day:—

Monday, Jan. 3.—*Confession and Thanksgiving.*—Chairman: Sir William Willis. Address by the Rev. J. Monro Gibson, M.A., D.D., Presbyterian Church, St. John's Wood.

Tuesday, Jan 4.—*The Church Universal*—Chairman: W. H. Seagram, Esq. Address by the Rev. G. Campbell Morgan, M.A., New Court Congregational Church.

Wednesday, Jan. 5.—*Nations and their Rulers.*—Chairman: Colonel Douglas Jones. Address by the Rev. W. L. Watkinson, M.A., President of the Methodist Conference.

Thursday, Jan. 6.—*Families and Schools*—Chairman: Donald Matheson, Esq. Address by the Rev. Archibald G. Brown, West Norwood Baptist Church.

Friday, Jan. 7.—*Foreign Missions.*—Chairman: Edward Rawlings, Esq. Address by the Rev. W. H. Barlow, M.A., D.D., Vicar of Islington.

Saturday, Jan. 8.—*Home Missions and the Jews.*—Chairman: John Paton, Esq. Address by the Rev. Prebendary Kitto, M.A., D.D., Vicar of St. Martin's-in-the-Fields.

The South London Branch of the Alliance have arranged for Meetings daily during the week:—

MONDAY, at 7.....*Metropolitan Tabernacle.*
Pastor THOMAS SPURGEON, to preside and give the Address.
„ 8.....*Christ Church, Westminster Bridge Road.*
The Rev. F. B. MEYER, B.A., to preside and give the Address.
TUESDAY, at 8 .....*Blackwood Hall, Wellfield Road, Streatham.*
The Rev. ARCHIBALD G. BROWN, to preside and give the Address.
WEDNESDAY, at 7.30....*Lecture Hall, Presbyterian Church, Clapham Road.*
The Rev. D. MACEWAN, D.D., to preside and give the Address.
THURSDAY, at 8.....*Grafton Square Congregational Church, Clapham.*
The Rev. J. G. ROGERS, B.A., D.D., to preside and give the Address.
FRIDAY, at 7.30.....*Lecture Hall, Wesleyan Church, Brixton Hill.*
The Rev. J. MARTYN LOBB, to preside and give the Address.
„ 8 .....*National School, Lutheran Place, Upper Tulse Hill.*
The Rev. H. WOFFINDIN, M.A., to preside and give the Address.
SATURDAY, at 8.....*The School Room, St. James', Clapham.*
The Rev. F. A. C. LILLINGSTON, M.A., to preside and give the Address.
„ 8.....*Parochial Hall, Cancell Rd., Cowley Rd., North Brixton.*
The Rev. W. R. MOWLL, M.A., to preside and give the Address.

Among the numerous series of Meetings to be held in various parts of the Metropolis, the following may be specially mentioned:—

Conference Hall, Mildmay Park, daily at 11, and evening at 7.30 o'clock.

The Central Y.M.C.A. have arranged for daily meetings (except Saturday) as follows:—

186 *Aldersgate Street, E.C.*, at 12 noon.
Centenary Hall, Bishopsgate Street, E.C., at 1 p.m.
Exeter Hall, Strand, W.C., at 1 p.m.

Down Lodge Hall, Wandsworth, daily (Saturday excepted) at 3.30 p.m.

St. Paul's, Onslow Square (*Church Room*), daily, Jan. 3 to 7, at 5.30 p.m., and on Saturday, Jan. 8, at 7.30 p.m.

PROCEEDINGS OF COUNCIL.

THE usual monthly meeting of the Council was held at the Alliance House on Thursday Dec. 9, Sir Theodore Ford (and afterwards Mr. Donald Matheson), presiding. After a passage of Scripture had been read by the Chairman, prayer was offered by the Rev. Gosset Tanner.

NEW MEMBERS.

The following persons were unanimously admitted to membership:—

Rev. R. W. Row, Exeter.
Rev. Dr. Usher, Tunbridge Wells.
Rev. W. H. Ferguson, M.A., Tunbridge Wells.
Rev. W. H. C. Palmer, Tunbridge Wells.
Rev. and Mrs. Buchanan, Langholm, N.B.
J. Macneill, Esq., Langholm, N.B.
Mrs. Reid, Leeds.
Rev. A. W. Ward, Leeds.
Miss M. E. Blyth, Leeds.
Rev. F. J. Wharton, Leeds.
Rev. G. G. Findlay, Leeds.
Rev. J. Shaw, Newcastle-on-Tyne.
Wm. Duncan, Esq., Newcastle-on-Tyne.
A. Bradnum, Esq., Newcastle-on-Tyne.
W. Maxwell, Esq., Newcastle-on-Tyne.
Rev. E. G. Falconer, Old Newton.
Rev. R. H. Chaplin, Stibbard,
Mrs. Gant, Hastings.
Miss M. J. Hennah, Hastings.
Mrs. Becket, Hastings.
Mr. and Mrs. A. H. Habershon, Hastings.
Miss M. F. Haggard, Hastings.
Mr. F. L. Dames, Hastings.
Mrs. H. F. Witherby, Blackheath.
Rev. G. C. Main, Fakenham.
Mrs. D. Roberts, Richmond, Surrey.
Miss and Miss J. Pollard, Richmond, Surrey.
Miss H. Tapton, Richmond, Surrey.
Miss Goodall, Richmond, Surrey.

Deputation Work.

The Secretary reported on recent deputation work by himself and by Mr. Jackson. He also stated that the Rev. G. D. Hooper, of Luton, had kindly undertaken to represent the Alliance at the annual meeting of the Langholm Branch, and Mr. Malcolm reports that his addresses were greatly appreciated. The Council desired that their best thanks be conveyed to Mr. Hooper for the service he thus rendered.

Obituary.

The death was reported of several members and friends of the Alliance, including Mr. James Bateman, Mr. George Skey, Miss A. M. Fox, the Rev. Professor Legge, and the Rev. Dr. Calderwood.

The Council desired that the expression of their sympathy be conveyed to the bereaved families.

Letter was read from Sir William Muir warmly thanking the Council for their expression of sympathy with him in the death of Lady Muir.

The late Rev. Dr. Stoughton.

The following resolution with reference to the death of the Rev. Dr. Stoughton, was submitted by the Secretary and unanimously adopted:—

"The Council have received the announcement of the death of the Rev. Dr. Stoughton with a deep sense of the loss sustained not only by the Evangelical Alliance, but by the whole Church of Christ.

"Dr. Stoughton, though not one of the actual founders of the Alliance, identified himself with it in its earlier days, and became one of its hon. secretaries more than twenty years ago. He took a prominent part in several of the great International Conferences, as well as in many of the British annual Conferences, and retained to the last his warm interest in its proceedings. The Alliance commended itself to his mind specially as a bond of union between Evangelical Christians of all lands.

"As an eminent Nonconformist divine, Dr. Stoughton occupied a position of great influence both as a preacher and writer. He was widely esteemed, and his personal friends included leading men in the Church of England as well as in all the Nonconformist Churches. His gracious dignity of bearing and his earnest Christian character will long be remembered by all who were brought into association with him.

"The Council, while giving praise to God for the bright example of their departed friend during his long and eventful career, desire to assure the members of the bereaved family of their fraternal sympathy with them in the loss they have sustained, and of their prayers that the Divine Comforter may be their support and solace."

The Week of Universal Prayer.

The Secretary stated that, in addition to the speakers named at last meeting as having consented to give addresses during the Week of Prayer, he had secured the Rev. Prebendary Kitto.

Turkey.

Important letters were read from the Constantinople Committee, and others with reference to the present state of affairs in the Turkish Empire, and particularly in regard to the Protestant Vekilate. The matter was fully considered by the Council, and certain action was agreed upon.

Madeira.

Communications were read from the Marquess of Salisbury with reference to the case of Mr. Smart at Madeira; and letters were also read from several friends who had been interested in Mr. Smart's case. From the somewhat modified complexion which the case has assumed there does not appear to be any need for further action on the part of the Alliance at present.

Cyprus.

An interesting communication was read from Mr. van Millingen, of Cyprus, thanking the Council for their grant in support of an Armenian pastor to labour among the refugees in Cyprus.

Report of the Blankenburg Conference.

Copies were laid upon the table of the Report of the recent Blankenburg Conference, kindly forwarded by Miss von Weling. The Council expressed their thanks for this gift.

RUSSIA.

A letter was read from a trusted correspondent conveying cordial thanks from a friend at Tiflis, who said that the recent help of the Council would "be the means of ministering to deep need and of drying many a tear. Earnest prayer will ascend to heaven on behalf of the givers."

The meeting was closed with prayer by the Rev. John Sharp.

SECRETARIAL DEPUTATION WORK.

MR. ARNOLD reported to the Council that he had paid a deputation visit to the north of England, where meetings had been held in several places on behalf of the Alliance; though one or two others which had been arranged had fallen through.

On Tuesday, Nov. 30, by the kind invitation of the Rev. G. Stringer and Mrs. Rowe, a number of friends assembled at the Headingley College, Leeds, to hear a statement regarding the recent work of the Alliance. It was some six years or more since Mr. Arnold's previous visit, and many had accepted Mr. and Mrs. Rowe's invitation to be present. Unfortunately, however, the weather proved very boisterous; and as the College is some distance out of the town, the number attending was considerably reduced. Mr. Rowe himself presided at the meeting, and several of the professors of the College, and other ministerial friends were present. The Secretary's statement was received with many marks of sympathetic interest. He touched upon the various departments of the work of the Alliance, and particularly dwelt upon its efforts on behalf of the persecuted Christians of Asia Minor and of Russia. At the close of the meeting some of those present gave their names for membership, though many were already enrolled. A collection was also taken in aid of the funds of the Alliance.

Mr. Arnold was most kindly and hospitably entertained by Mr. and Mrs. Rowe for two days, and then went on to Durham, where he was the guest of the Rev. Dr. and Mrs. Bruce, at St. Nicholas Vicarage. On the evening of Thursday, Dec. 2, Mr. Arnold gave an address on the principles and work of the Alliance in St. Nicholas Church, the Rev. Dr. Bruce taking the preliminary part of the service. There was a good attendance, and much interest seemed to be awakened in the details given by the Secretary.

Proceeding to Newcastle-on-Tyne, Mr. Arnold was most kindly received by Mr. and Mrs. Bainbridge, at Jesmond, and on Monday, Dec. 6, a well-attended drawing-room meeting was held. Mr. and Mrs. Bainbridge had invited a large number of friends, but stormy weather prevailed, and the numbers were consequently reduced. Some of the reporters of the local newspapers, however, were present, and a lengthy report of the Secretary's address was given in *The Daily Leader*. Afterwards, Mr. Arnold had the opportunity of meeting some of the ministerial and other friends of the Alliance, for consultation; and it is gratifying to add that, though many of those present at the meeting were already members of the Alliance, a few new names were received for enrolment. A collection was also taken in aid of the funds.

On Tuesday, Nov. 16, a meeting was held at Mildmay House, Hastings, at which about fifty persons were present, in answer to the kind invitation of Mrs. Douglas Dale. The Rev. A. D. Carden, vicar of St. Andrews, presided. After the Chairman had warmly welcomed the Deputation Secretary of the Evangelical Alliance, the Rev. H. R. T. Jackson spoke on the principles and world-wide work of the Alliance. Several friends gave their names for enrolment as members at the close of the meeting.

On Sunday, Nov. 21, the Deputation Secretary was engaged at Riddings in Derbyshire, preaching on behalf of the British & Foreign Bible Society. An opportunity was given him in the afternoon to address a large men's Bible class on the work of the Alliance on behalf of persecuted Christians. On the following day he visited the Rev. G. Edgcome, vicar of St. Peter's, Nottingham, with a view of securing a meeting for the Alliance at a later date.

On Monday, Nov. 22, the annual meeting of the Richmond Branch was held in the Lecture Hall of that town, Clifford B. Edgar, Esq., J.P., presiding. The meeting was opened with prayer, offered by the Rev. A. H. McTier, and the reading of God's Word by the Rev. J. McKim. The Hon. Secretary gave a report of the work of the past year. Mr. Garden, hon. treasurer, presented the balance sheet, which showed that £10 10s. was forwarded to the parent Society, and pointed out the fact that though fifty members regularly paid their subscriptions, there were a good many who gave nothing. The Chairman then gave his address, drawing attention to Sunday-school work and Sabbath observance, both of which the Alliance has actively promoted, and spoke of Evangelical work in Italy and West Africa. The Rev. H. R. T. Jackson pointed out the strength which is given to the Alliance by its Basis, and gave an account of the recent work of the Alliance. A few closing words were spoken by the Rev. J. Mauchlen. A special attraction in the meeting was the singing of two solos by Mrs. Mauchlen. Several persons gave in their names to become members of the Alliance.

On Saturday, Nov. 27, the annual meeting of the Blackheath Branch was held in the drawing-room of Mr. and Mrs. Marten. After a report of the work of the branch had been given by the Hon. Secretary (Mr. E. P. Le Feuvre), an interesting address was given by the Chairman, from his own reminiscences, upon the history and labours of the Alliance. An account of recent operations was given by the Deputation Secretary.

On Sunday, Nov. 28, Mr. Jackson, on invitation of the Vicar, the Rev. A. Mercer, preached on behalf of the Alliance at Little Heath, Potters Bar. Unfortunately the Sunday was wet, and the numbers attending the services were thus reduced.

LANGHOLM BRANCH.

The annual meeting of the Langholm Branch of the Evangelical Alliance was held on Friday evening, Nov. 26. There was a good attendance. Mr. Malcolm, of Burnfoot, the Secretary of the Branch, occupied the Chair, and after the singing of a hymn, and prayer offered by the Rev. James Panton, Free Church, referred, in his opening remarks, to the recent meetings of the British Alliance, and it had always been the habit at this meeting to make some allusion to matters that had been brought before the meetings of the parent society. It had this year met at Cambridge, for the first time in the fifty-one years of its existence. Mr. Malcolm then went on to say something of the various speakers at the Alliance meeting. Dr. Moule, in his address, had pointed out how the Alliance brought before them union in prayer, more especially the United Week of Prayer over the whole world; union in conference, and union in action. It had often been asked, What does the Alliance do? He thought it did enough if it made Christians love one another, but it did a great deal more. Among lady speakers at the Conference, Mrs. Bird Bishop gave one of the most interesting addresses he thought they could have listened to. She spoke of some of the features of her extraordinary journeys—how when travelling through China, when surrounded by howling mobs, she had remained calm and unmoved amongst it all. Her soldiers fled at the slightest difficulty. She had travelled through the greater part of Asia, and she had visited 176 missionary stations, and she said she did not know what the denominations were which sent these missionaries abroad. She gave a splendid testimony to the harmony which existed in missionary work. There was at the Conference a Russian who lamented that he might not speak on a more pleasant subject than the persecution of the Stundists. There were 300,000 of these scattered throughout Russia, which was the only country which gave colporteurs the privilege of carrying the Word of God free by railway, and was such a persecuting country at this time. It was the Greek Church, of course, that persecuted, and how sad a thing it was to think that in Russia liberty of conscience was so much ignored. It was a very great disappointment to him, and he was sure to all who knew the name of Webb-Peploe as the name of the father of the young man who was to have addressed them that night, that Mr. Webb-Peploe was ill and could not come. He was working among the fishermen and sailors at South Shields, and as

they always tried to introduce variety into their meetings, and they thought an account of the work would be interesting, they had asked him to come. Mr. Malcolm then introduced the Rev. G. D. Hooper, of Luton, whose friendship he had made, he said, at Cambridge. One thing he would mention before he sat down, with reference to the Cambridge Conference. Besides the reports inserted by the dailies in London, including *The Times*, no less than seventeen provincial papers had daily telegraphic communications of what the Alliance was about. It showed that there was a greater interest taken in the Alliance, and in the spirit of union.

Mr. Hooper then addressed the meeting. He had great pleasure in coming to the land of Knox, of Chalmers, the Erskines, and that grand old Dr. Bonar, and of the great sons for which the Scottish Church had long been famous, not to mention other names in the studies of arts of peace and war, which have carried the name of Scotland throughout the world. Though he was only a poor Southerner, and came from the smallest county, yet it was the county of that grand dreamer, old John Bunyan, and its borders were still famous with the names and work of John Newton, and of Cowper the poet. Mr. Hooper then went on to point out the union which should characterise Christians. They were all one in Jesus Christ, in spite of different forms of worship. He gave the figures by which the Bible characterised Christians. They were likened to members of one body, of which Christ was the head; to a building of which Christ was the chief corner stone; to branches all grafted into one vine; to the bride of Christ, the Sons of God, and members of Christ's body—the mystical body of Chrift. Mr. Hooper then went on to refer to the work of the Alliance; of the blessing to themselves and the Church which had been achieved by the United Week of Prayer; and of the union which the Alliance had been the means of bringing about among the churches in towns in England. That had been made possible by the work of the Evangelical Alliance. Mr. Hooper concluded by advising united effort in Christian work, and dwelt on the good that might be done if all denominations were thus united. As showing the spread of the Gospel during the Queen's reign he mentioned the fact that at the beginning of it the Fiji Islands were peopled by savage cannibals, and this year, on hearing of the famine in India, they had subscribed and sent a large sum of money to the Lord Mayor's Famine Fund.

At the close the Chairman expressed, on behalf of the meeting, the enjoyment with which they had listened to Mr. Hooper's address, and their obligation to him, and the meeting was brought to a close with prayer offered by the Rev. George Orr.

A successful prayer meeting was held at three o'clock in the afternoon in the North U.P. Church, at which the Rev. Mr. Orr presided. This was followed by a tea meeting, Mr. Malcolm being the host, as on many former occasions.—(*Condensed from "The Eskdale & Liddisdale Advertiser."*)

THE LATE REV. DR. STOUGHTON.

REFERENCE has already been made in our columns to the loss sustained by the Evangelical Alliance, in the removal by death of one of its Honorary Secretaries, the Rev. John Stoughton, D.D., who had been connected with it almost from its infancy. [In another column will be found the minute of the Council upon the subject.]

Dr. Stoughton was a remarkable man, and his culture and attainments, no less than his natural refinement, gave him almost a unique position among eminent Nonconformists. While strongly attached to his own (the Congregational) denomination, which he considered to be "on the whole nearest to New Testament teaching," he was large-hearted and broad-minded enough to be on the most friendly terms with leading men of all the Churches of our country, including the Established Church. He was one of the very few Nonconformists who have ever been invited to speak in Westminster Abbey; he was on the most brotherly terms of intimacy with the late Dean, Dr. Stanley, and was asked to take a prominent part at the funeral of the Dean's wife, Lady Augusta Stanley. One of the great characteristics of Dr. Stoughton's mind was his determination, whenever he differed

in views from a brother Christian, to seek always to place himself in the position of the friend from whom he differed. He desired not only to do justice to an opponent, but to place the views of such a one in the most favourable light. To say that he was scrupulously fair and impartial in his judgment, is really to understate the truth. His constant efforts to promote a better feeling between Churchmen and Nonconformists brought him into close relations with such leaders as Archbishop Tait, Dean Alford, and Dean Hook. Nor did he ever lose touch with his brother Nonconformists of the other Churches. It was on the initiative of Matthew Arnold that Dr. Stoughton was elected a member of the Athenæum Club.

As a member of the Evangelical Alliance, and one who took a very deep interest in its proceedings, Dr. Stoughton was well and widely known. He had made it a point of conscience to be present at many of its international gatherings, where he was not only a familiar figure, but was greatly esteemed. His knowledge of religious matters on the Continent of Europe was large and varied; and this gave him a position of considerable influence among the leaders of other Evangelical Churches. He seemed to realise that, whilst the motto of the Evangelical Alliance —"*Unum corpus sumus in Christo*"—should be the ruling idea among the members of the various Evangelical Churches in our own country, this fact of the unity of the Body of Christ had a far wider and more important meaning when applied to Evangelical Christians of the whole world, as embraced in the membership of the Evangelical Alliance. Nor was it only at the International Conferences of the Alliance, but also at the annual gatherings of the British Organization, that Dr. Stoughton's presence and help was always so much appreciated, though, during the past few years, he had been laid aside from active work.

As a writer, Dr. Stoughton had also a wide popularity, as the following list of his principal works will show: "Tractarian Theology," "Windsor in the Olden Time," "Shades and Echoes of Old London," "The Palace of Glass," "Lights of the World," "Stars of the East," "Ages of Christendom," "The Pen, Palm, and the Pulpit," "Philip Doddridge," "The Song of Christ's Flock in the Twenty-third Psalm," "The Progress of Divine Revelation," "Homes and Haunts of Luther," "Spanish Reformers," "Scenes in Other Lands," "William Penn," "John Howard," "Religion in the Reign of Queen Ann," "Recollections of a Long Life," "Lights and Shadows of Church Life," "History of Religion in England, from the Opening of the Long Parliament to the End of the Eighteenth Century" (Six Volumes).

But Dr. Stoughton will be remembered chiefly for his catholicity of mind, his large-hearted sympathies, and his high Christian character, which has left its impress upon all who were at any time associated with him.

CONTRIBUTIONS RECEIVED FROM NOV. 18 TO DEC. 16, 1897.

	£	s.	d.
Rev. J. L. Le Pelley (3 yrs) ..	1	11	6
E. H. Garbett, Esq.	0	10	6
Dr. R. B. McClelland, J.P.	0	10	0
Rev. A. Sturge	0	10	6
The Misses Seeley	0	10	0
O. Robinson, Esq.	1	1	0
Rev. W. R. and Mrs. Golding (2 yrs)	1	0	0
Mrs. Johnston (2 yrs)	1	1	0
H. W. Fry, Esq. (2 yrs)	2	2	0
Mrs. Jackson	1	1	0
Mrs. Hunt Leaman	1	0	0
U. P. Meetings Committee, Exeter, per Rev. J. Pitkin ..	1	1	0
Mrs. Robt. Lindsay	1	0	0
Miss Shelford	1	1	0
Mrs. H. F. Witherby	1	1	0
Major Oakes	1	1	0
G. H. Pember, Esq.	1	1	0
C. de Neufville, Esq.	0	19	5
Mrs. Meredith	1	1	0
Mrs. Mercer (2 yrs)	0	10	0
J. N. Bennett, Esq. (2 yrs) ..	2	2	0
Mrs. Findlay Anderson	0	10	0
Rev. and Mrs. J. F. Daly	0	10	6
Miss A. G. C. Douglas	0	10	6
Rev. Canon & Mrs. Pennett (2 yrs.)	1	1	0
Mrs. Messenger	1	1	0
Bishop of Exeter	1	1	0
Captain and Mrs. G. J. May ..	1	0	0
J. E. Wakefield, Esq. (2 yrs.) ..	2	2	0
Miss Scoresby-Jackson	1	1	0
J. M. Bourne, Esq., and Mrs. ..	1	1	0
Miss E. J. Paul	1	1	0
Miss Davenport	0	10	0
Rev. S. J. F. Denman	0	10	6
T. E. Stebbing, Esq.	0	10	0
Northampton Subsns.—			
Per Mrs. Page	3	13	0
Liverpool Subsns.—			
Per Rev. S. Hawkes	1	15	6
Offerings at meeting at Headingley College—			
Per Rev. G. Stringer Rowe ..	2	0	0
Southboro' Branch—			
Per H. V. Pearson, Esq. ..	8	19	0
Ashbourne Branch—			
Per Rev. S. Hackett	4	2	6
Richmond Branch—			
Per W. Garden, Esq.	10	10	0
Blackheath & Lee Branch—			
Per E. P. Le Feuvre, Esq. ..	7	15	6
Collection at Drawing-Room Meeting at Newcastle-on-Tyne—			
Per T. M. Bainbridge, Esq. ..	4	9	6
Sums under 10s.	4	14	6
Special Fund for Persecuted Christians.			
Mrs. Warren	2	0	0
The Misses Goldsbury	10	0	0
Jno. Cory, Esq.	10	0	0
Armenian Christians Relief Fund.			
Thos. Allen, Esq.	0	10	6

Alliance House, 7 Adam Street, Strand, London, W.C.

*** Remittances may be made payable to the order of the General Secretary (Mr. A. J. Arnold), or to the Treasurer.